Morality Police: Sexuality Governance at the League of Nations

by

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Abstract

During the interwar period, the international community was zealously involved in the regulation of sexuality and vice under the auspices of the League of Nations. The roaring twenties had ushered with it a revival of morality policing in Europe and North America. The League of Nations Sex Trafficking Committee, led by social purity reformers and religious organizations, operated to create policy aimed at eliminating vice districts, music halls, and cabarets. Once this international policy was issued, volunteer organizations (spread literally around the globe) would carry out the carceral policy directives.

Morality Police is the first genealogy of this remarkable period, providing an "ontology of ourselves" that seeks to expose the disreputable origins of anti-sex trafficking campaigns. This project narrates how the international community policed morality, following the twists and turns as they occurred on the Sex Trafficking Committee and at local levels from France to India. Drawing on over 10,000 archival documents collected from the League of Nations archive, this project argues that rather than being primarily concerned with abolishing state regulated prostitution, the Sex Trafficking Committee more insidiously engaged in a campaign of sexuality governance. While this campaign to halt changing sexual and cultural norms was ultimately unsuccessful, it was remarkably effective at repressing and disciplining sexual outlaws during its tenure. This project concludes with a stark reminder that while the campaign to stamp out vice and

immorality in the interwar period was ultimately a failure, its legacy is still with us. Arguing that the laws and propaganda campaigns during this period created stories of international trafficking that were so powerful, the narratives became folklore that survived generations awaiting another eruption of moral panic.

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Chapter 1

Witch Hunts and Proxy Wars: Sexual Panic during the Interwar Period

In the escalating war against pornography, pornography has already won.

- Amy Adler[1]

Vice had become, as it were, steam propelled.

-David T. Courtwright[2]

1 Introduction

War, poverty, disease, political unrest, and mass im/migration to urban centres spurred a moral panic during the interwar period that focused on the need to morally reform all those considered to have "fallen into immorality". A powerful transnational network of moral reformers developed that successfully targeted thousands of women for deportation or incarceration in church-run female penitentiaries known as Magdalene Asylums.[3] The rescue movement mushroomed into a sophisticated system of surveillance of railway stations and raids of music halls, cabarets, and brothels. This transnational rescue movement was led by a colourful cast of female moral reformers in Geneva, at what was known as the *League of Nations Advisory Committee for Sex Trafficking of Women and Children* ("the Committee").

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[1] Amy Adler, "All Porn All the Time, A Symposium on Problems of Censorship in a New Technological Age," *NYU Review of. Law. & Social Change* 31, (2007): 695, doi: https://socialchangenyu.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Amy-Adler_RLSC_31.4.pdf.

[2] David T. Courtwright, "Global Anti-Vice Activism: a Postmortem," *in*, *Global Anti-Vice Activism, 1890–1950: Fighting Drinks, Drugs, and 'Immorality'*, eds. Jessica R. Pliley, Robert Kramm, and Harald Fischer-Tiné, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), doi:10.1017/CBO9781316212592.014.

[3] See George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940*, (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Courtwright, *"Global Anti-Vice Activism"*, Ian Tyrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010). Kindle Edition; Ian Tyrell, *Women's World Women's Empire: The Women's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). Kindle Edition.

It is a little-known fact that the League of Nations was zealously involved in the regulation of sex trafficking. Histories of the League of Nations characterize the organization as primarily a political institution aimed at maintaining peace, disarmament and to a lesser degree minority rights.[4] A recent reinvigoration of research into the League of Nations problematizes this characterization- highlighting the transnational economic work undertaken at and by the League.[5] The activities of the League in relation to prostitution and obscenity have largely remained unexplored. A small but exciting body of sequestered scholarship has begun to unearth the vast archive of materials produced by the Committee.[6] This scholarship focuses on a self-styled social cause known as abolition. Borrowing from the language of abolitions fighting the Trans Atlantic slave trade, these new "abolitionists" sought to abolish legal sex work and brothels. Some of these scholars explore the activities of feminist actors who wielded significant political sway, advocating

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[4] See C. Howard-Ellis, *The Origin Structure and Working of the League of Nations* (London: Riverside Press, 1928); M. Patrick Cottrell, *The League of Nations: Enduring Legacies of the First Experiment at World Organization* (New York: Routledge, 2018); F.P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952). See also the Covenant of the League itself, League of Nations, *Covenant of the League of Nations*, 28 April 1919, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/3dd8b9854.html [accessed 22 April 2018].

[5] Michael Fakhri, *Sugar and the Making of International Trade Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[6] Paul Knepper, "The Investigation into the Traffic in Women and Children at the League of Nations: Sociological Jurisprudence as an International Social Project," *Law and History Review* 34, no. 1 (2016); Katarina Leppanen, "Movement of Women: Trafficking in the Interwar Era," *Women's International Forum* 30, no. 523 (2007); Daniel Gorman, "Empire, Internationalism and the Campaign against the Traffic in Women and Children in the 1920s," *Twentieth Century British History* 19, no. 186 (2008): 216; Stephanie Limoncelli, *The Politics of Trafficking: The First International Movement to Combat the Sexual Exploitation of Women* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); Jessica Pliley, "Claims to Protection: The Rise and Fall of Feminist Abolitionism in the League of Nations' Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children," *Journal of Women's History* 22, no. 90 (2010): 115; and Magaaly Rodriguez Garcia, "The League of Nations and the Moral Recruitment of Women," *International Review of Social History* 57, no. 97 (2012): 128.

for abolition of state sanctioned brothels.[7] Others focus on how states adopted or rejected these abolitionist policies, both domestically and in their colonies.[8]

The narrative that has begun to emerge from these accounts shares some common characteristics. We are told the feminists on the Committee are descended from Josephine Butler, who led the successful campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts in Britain before WWI (discussed below). Actors on the Committee were divided into two categories, "abolitionists" and "regulationists". The "abolitionists" were both feminists from voluntary organizations and women government representatives. They were rallied around the ultimate objective of abolishing state regulated prostitution. Then there were the "regulationists" who were generally men who supported increased state control and regulation of prostitution. These men occupied positions on the Committee as representatives of governments and voluntary organizations. Accounts of the Committee focused on how these two groups battled for dominance, and detail the debates, deadlocks and abolitionist successes on the Committee.

For example, Stephanie Limoncelli, in *Politics of Trafficking*, focuses on how the feminist actors on the Committee united against proposals mandating expulsion of foreign prostitutes from state brothels.[9] This proposal was controversial in countries where prostitution was still legal. It was controversial because it essentially criminalized foreign women for doing what was legal for

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[7] See Garcia, *"Moral Recruitment of Women"*, who discusses the Committee and its female membership, arguing that the women's organizations were viewed as more progressive and argues that a moral rather than a liberal-feminist or humanitarian perspective dominated the debate on rescue work at 120-121, and Limoncelli, *"First International Movement"*, who details the debates on the Committee regarding the abolition of licensed houses in Geneva. Pliley, *"Claims to Protection"* assesses the impact of international feminists on the anti-sex trafficking movement during the interwar period.

[8] See Knepper, *"Sociological Jurisprudence,"* who provides a history of Rockefeller and the development of the abolition movement in the United States; Gorman, *"Empire, Internationalism,"* focuses his inquiry into the role played by British government representatives and British-dominated voluntary associations.

[9] Limoncelli, *"First International Movement,"* 1 where she states: "Initially conceived as a global humanitarian effort to protect women from sexual exploitation, the movement's international feminist inspired vision failed to achieve its universal goal. Instead, in both international settings and in local areas, it gradually gave way to nationalist concerns about protecting states from certain groups of "undesirable" migrants and led to increased social control of women".

non-foreign sex workers. She details the early success (but eventual failure) of abolitionists in blocking a proposal to mandate repatriation of foreign prostitutes.[10] Likewise Paul Knepper, in his account of a large scale twenty-seven country study of sex trafficking undertaken by the League, its so-called "First Enquiry", maintains that the Enquiry's most important finding was linking international trafficking to state regulated brothels.[11] This finding, Knepper argues, laid the empirical foundation necessary for abolitionists to argue that there was an established connection between state regulated prostitution and international trafficking. Knepper argues this was the most important finding of the Enquiry, because it provided abolitionists with a factual footing to argue for the closure of all state regulated brothels.

This project argues that scholars have over emphasized the importance of the state regulation debate on the Committee, or at least missed much of what the Committee was involved in. While it is true that much political debate was dedicated to this issue, archival records of the Committee reveal it was also involved in a much more complicated web of morality governance. By assuming the feminists on the Committee were primarily concerned with state sanctioned brothels, the current scholarship on the Committee does not properly situate itself in the vastly different social and cultural landscape of the early 1920s. This project details how both groups, the so-called abolitionists and regulationists, were ultimately concerned with governing and controlling the sexuality of the younger generation.

The issue of state sanctioned brothels *was* the most contentious issue on the Committee, and it *did* occupy much of the debate in the minutes. This research does not challenge that finding, but instead looks at the issues where there was less controversy. It examines the areas of agreement,

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[10] Limoncelli, 1.
[11] Knepper, *"Sociological Jurisprudence,"* concluding "During the interwar period, the League of Nations made a significant attempt to build international law on a foundation of sociological jurisprudence", 72.

where policy was easily passed and published. Looking at what was agreed upon by both sides tells us much about the general shared attitudes of the time, what was commonly understood and a myriad of moral beliefs that were taken for granted. For example, beliefs that women needed protection from predatory men; the vulnerability of girls; the ways girls may contribute to their own downfall; and the irreversible nature of this downfall. The archival records indicate that the Committee was concerned and sometimes united on a range of issues from obscenity and alcohol to music halls and dancing.[12] The issue of state sanctioned brothels was just one aspect of a broad strategy to stamp out vice and immorality.

This project argues that the ultimate goal of the Committee was not to abolish state sanctioned brothels, but instead to govern sexuality, particularly that of young women. Social and cultural norms underwent an enormous shift after the First World War. This project argues that the Committee, populated by women in the rescue movement, were actually engaged in a cultural war against women who flouted traditional morality and Christian chastity. On the issue of regulation there was disagreement, to be sure. However, on other issues the two camps worked surprisingly effectively to develop a world wide web of sexuality governance structures.

With women at the helm, the League of Nations provided an infrastructure and leadership to the rescue movement that allowed it to blossom in a way that would not have been possible without the work of the Committee. In the period before WWI, there was already a paradox developing within the moral reformers' formation of gender.[13] Middle-class reformers were

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[12] Knepper, 72.

[13] Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada*, 1885-1925 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991) where she argues: "The great paradox about femininity formation in/through moral reform campaigns was that certain middle-class women made careers out of studying "the problem" of the immigrant woman or the urban girl. These women doctor, social workers, deaconesses, the Salvation Army officers travelled freely around the city, protected by their uniform and their profession, and perhaps did not realize that their unprecedented freedom was built on the prior assumption that ordinary women were helpless object in need of study and reform" at 30.

making careers out of studying, and trying to save, "the immigrant woman and urban girl".[14] Lawmakers saw the issue of prostitution as uniquely feminine in character. As a result, it was one of the few areas of public policy in which women could participate.

During the interwar period notably, the Committee was sometimes populated by a majority of women. Women were appointed as government representatives and represented large transnational rescue organizations on the Committee. Under this leadership, the League of Nations developed a sophisticated and nuanced system of sexuality governance in collaboration with volunteer organizations and law enforcement at local levels. The Committee played a leadership role in the rescue movement by conducting studies into the issue of sex trafficking; by concluding treaties; by issuing resolutions and policy recommendations; and by acting as a hub of information collection and dissemination to the local rescue operations.

While prostitution remained legal in many European countries, moral reformers had launched effective campaigns of local policing and punishment that had shut down entire vice districts in some European cities. The issue of prostitution became imbued with many other issues assumed associated with it such as slums, gambling, alcohol consumption, music halls, cabarets, vice districts, public disorderly behaviour, and so on. When discussing the "social evil" of prostitution, these moral reformers were sometimes specifically talking about the issue of prostitution. The euphemism also referred to other working-class activities popular in cities.

One of the reasons that the rescue movement was so successful during this period was a result of increased collaboration with law enforcement and the court systems. Interwar moral reformers enjoyed greater collaboration with law enforcement than its "white slavery" predecessor. As a result, rescue workers were often given police powers to arrest those considered

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[14] Valverde, *Light Soap and Water,* 30.

at risk of "falling into immorality". Women were being hired as police officers to patrol vice districts for immorality. Courts around Europe began sentencing women to reformation in Magdalene Asylums.

These asylums known as "rescue homes", "Magdalene Asylums" or "Magdalene Laundries" experienced a revival during the interwar period.[15] The Magdalene Asylums were religious, privately funded and ran transnationally in Europe, North America and their respective colonies. They provided economic opportunities for middle-class female reformers while simultaneously providing a shadow system of incarceration for the so-called fallen women. These rescue homes housed "immoral" women and girls of all varieties including sex workers, unwed mothers, sexual assault survivors, lesbians, bisexuals and anyone remotely gender nonconforming. Based on the principle of penance, these homes essentially operated as workhouses where the inmates worked in laundries for 12-hour days under strict rules of silence.[16]

Frances Finnegan details how Magdalene Asylums developed in nineteenth century Britain as a major response to prostitution. This female penitentiary system was widespread throughout Britain, and saw a revival during the reactionary climate of the 1930s. Finnegan writes:

> [The] [f]emale Penitentiary Movement- based on morbid fears of women's sexuality, and fed, approved of, and financially supported by the society from which it emerged – has been ranked, along with the Contagious Diseases Acts, as

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[15] Frances Finnegan, *Do Penance or Perish: Magdalene Asylums in Ireland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 112 where she explains: "In the reactionary climate of the 1920s and 30s the Irish Magdalene Movement experienced something of a revival, and ambitions for expanding and consolidating the system soared. In that period of dire poverty, a magnificent Chapel was built for the Community in Limmerick; and in Waterford (where hopes for the new Asylum sheltering "at least 300 refugees" were never to be realized) confidence in a glorious future was restored. Extensions to provide accommodation for 160 inmates were carried out in this bleak period, and the Irish Magdalene system, appalling in concept and practice, was given a further lease on life".

[16] Finnegan, "*Penance or Perish,"* 28.

> the most blatant form of class and sexual discrimination of the most hypocritical of eras – the Victorian age.[17]

Gendered shame-based tools of punishment were used on these female inmates in an attempt to transform them into proper ladies. While these institutions flourished, particularly in Greater Britain during the interwar period, there has been very little historical enquiry into their operations and relationship with the state. The female penitentiary movement resulted in women being incarcerated in institutions run by religious organizations. This renders their experience difficult to find in state archives. This project begins to unearth these stories of sexuality governance at the League of Nations. Based on over 10,000 documents from the League of Nations Archives, the actual operations and complexities of the interwar rescue movement are coming into clearer focus.

The archives contain a massive amount of information that was both created and gathered by the Committee. This includes minutes of the annual meetings and annexes to those meetings. In these annexes there include reports from countries and missionary groups around the world on their anti-vice operations. As a result, these annual reports offer a unique glimpse into details of anti-vice operations during the period. In addition to these official reports, the archives also include thousands of unofficial documents produced by the Committee and its members. These documents include personal and professional letters between missionaries engaged in anti-vice work, photographs, drafts of reports, and other correspondence produced during the Committee's tenure. Many of these documents, stuffed into bankers' boxes and maintained in excellent condition at the archive in Geneva, have yet to be explored. This project is not a comprehensive

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[17] Finnegan, "*Penance or Perish,"* 1.

review of all the materials available, but it does represent the most comprehensive review of the archives to date.

The fact that the League of Nations was zealously and effectively engaged in the regulation and governance of sexuality is important; the fact this history is largely untold is equally salient. This project aims to inspire further enquiry into the nature and extent of sexuality governance during the interwar period and how it compares to contemporary periods of moral panic surrounding sexuality.

1.1 League of Nations Advisory Committee on Sex Trafficking

Article 23 of the Covenant set out a narrow mandate for the League of Nations with respect to sex trafficking.[18] Article 23(c) established that the League of Nations was entrusted with the *supervision over the execution of the agreements* with regard to the traffic in women and children.[19] Under this authority, the League of Nations established the Committee.[20] However, the narrow scope of Article 23(c) did not determine the actual scale and impact of the Committee's work, or limit it, as we shall see.

The Committee included the largest proportion of women of any other body at the League of Nations. A broad cast of characters from government appointments and voluntary organizations directed the work of the Committee. Members set the agenda, put forth resolutions, debated issues, established subcommittees and appointed Rapporteurs to research specific issues. If there were disagreements at the Committee about whether an issue fell within its mandate, the Secretary

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[18] Covenant of the League itself, League of Nations, *Covenant of the League of Nations*, 28 April 1919, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/3dd8b9854.html [accessed 22 April 2018].
[19] Article 23(c) reads: "will entrust the League with the general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children, and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs;"
[20] The Committee was a subset of the Fifth Committee of the League of Nations, which was established to deal with "social and humanitarian questions", including traffic in opium and dangerous drugs, traffic in women and the protection of children, refugees and intellectual cooperation.

would request the Council to determine its competence. This led to an expansive agenda that was much broader than its formal competence as set forth in Article 23(c).

The members of the Committee included delegates appointed by governments and assessors appointed by voluntary associations. The Committee had a fascinating tenure and in order to understand what was actually accomplished, it is necessary to weave the stories of government delegates, non-member state actors, and assessors (which was another term used for volunteer organizations) from the international voluntary organizations. At the Committee's inaugural meeting in 1922 there were representatives of nine countries (Great Britain, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, Poland, Romania, Uruguay and Spain), and five voluntary organizations. By 1934, the Committee had grown to include 12 countries (adding Belgium, India, Turkey and Chile) and seven voluntary organizations. Delegates of governments had the right to vote on the Committee, but otherwise the assessors and delegates had the same roles and powers.

Formally the Secretariat was involved in tracing the status of treaties and collecting and interpreting an enormous amount of information received from governments around the world on the regulation of prostitution. At the first meeting of the Committee, the Secretariat was also charged with receiving and transmitting information of relevance to trafficking between members of the Committee and local police. As a result, the Secretariat also became an information hub for the governments and voluntary organizations working on trafficking around the globe.

The League Committee made four major contributions to the rescue movement and these efforts allowed the rescue industry to develop in a way that would not have been possible but for the Committee's advocacy and policy work. First, the Committee facilitated cooperation between different denominations of religious rescue workers with unprecedented success. Second but nonetheless very connected, the International legal framework whitewashed rescue work with more palatable sex trafficking language. Religious missions were renamed as "assessors for

volunteer organizations", and international laws couched the extremely unfair system of religious penance for immorality into a secular vernacular of protection and rescue. Thirdly, the Committee's work resulted in a massive body of knowledge on sex trafficking and vice. This process of information creation was actually reproducing and evolving the archetypes and myths that continue to circulate in today's legislative climate.

Finally, and most critically, the Committee lent legal legitimacy to the rescue movement in a number of ways that have so far been overlooked by historians. During the interwar period the League of Nations provided a novel legal basis to justify station work and rescue homes. Station workers would patrol railway stations and ports to keep guard against souteneurs and watch out for women at risk of falling into immorality. These women were now empowered by both religious conviction and international law. The rescue industry was already operating sometimes in the shadow of national criminal and constitutional laws during the period. When the League of Nations shifted its focus from national policy to local action, it encouraged these rescue missions to operate in the shadows of the rule of law. Before the Committee, the rescue industry justified its existence through religious beliefs, now they also had this new strange body of international law to rely on.

International law making of the kind undertaken by the Committee was very new. The Committee is the first international body to create international law on sex trafficking on this scale. People were unsure what it meant and what sort of authority it had over national law. Indeed, those queries continue today regarding the legal standing of international norms within national legal systems. The question of whether and to what extent international law "counts" as law is on the virtually every course syllabus of international law. Two alternative systems justifying extremely intrusive raids and surveillance for immoral women and evil men was developing. Both the religious footing and the international legal apparatus developed at the League encouraged these religious zealots to overstep national laws (if necessary) and develop pernicious systems of

morality policing and controls that operated on a local level but were, oddly, imagined and coordinated in a transnational space.

This project argues that the work of the League in the area of sex trafficking should be conceptualized as an integral aspect of a moral panic regarding social and demographic changes in the urban environment in Europe and North America during the interwar period.[21] The issue of prostitution was the focus of international policy making and local reform work, not because there was an explosion of sex trafficking, but rather because it operated as an ideal theme for a movement primarily concerned with the regulation of class, gender and race in urban centres. As Mariana Valverde has summarized:

> [Prostitution] was an ideal theme for a movement primarily concerned with the regulation of morality, class, sex and gender in the new urban environment. Indeed, if prostitution had not existed, the social purity movement would have had to invent it- which helps us to understand why white slavery, which was never proved to exist on a large scale, was so successfully invented.[22]

By way of introduction, the remainder of this chapter will explore the notion of a moral panic and argue that the social conditions during the interwar period provided ideal conditions for an eruption of a moral panic. Next it will outline why prostitution was such a popular theme for the social reformers, by outlining how norms of gender, class and race were dealt with under the auspices of prostitution and sex trafficking idiom and legislation. Finally, it will provide an outline for the chapters that follow.

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[21] The moral panic theory relied on in this thesis is developed by Stuart Hall in, *Policing the State: Mugging, the State and Law & Order 35th Edition*, eds. Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke and Brian Roberts, (New York City: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013).

[22] Valverde, *"Light, Soap and Water,"* 79.

1.2 Witch Hunts and Proxy Wars

In the past one hundred and fifty years, moral panics have tended to follow relatively similar patterns, which can be forecast by a handful of factors. When broad economic and demographic changes alter the social landscape of urban centres, there is a predictable reaction from those who wish to maintain the status quo. In particular, whenever there is a threat (or perceived threat) to gendered power relations, to white supremacy, or to the capitalist class structure, there tends to be a corresponding moral panic surrounding a collection of parallel challenges to sexuality norms and/ or family structures.[23] Debates on sexuality become ganglions of social anxieties: a collection of social nerve endings. In other words, social anxieties surrounding class, race and gender often coalesce around debates involving sexual behaviour or challenges to the family structure. Factors that tend to precede moral panics surrounding sexuality include changing roles of women, changes in sex ratios, sharp increases in immigration and/ or migration to urban centres, developments in technology, war, poverty, racism, and uprisings among the working classes.

Moral panics concerned with sexual behaviour rise and fall on the tides of social change. Contemporary debates about sexuality, as Gayle Rubin argues, have many similarities with religious disputes of earlier centuries because both carry immense symbolic weight.[24] The past hundred and fifty years have demonstrated that in times of great social stress and acute collective anxiety "that people are likely to get dangerously crazy about sexuality".[25]

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[23] William Kuby, *Conjugal Misconduct, Defying Marriage Law in the Twentieth-Century United States* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).
[24] Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of Sexual Politics," in Vance, Carol S. *Pleasure and Danger*. (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 143.
[25] Rubin, *"Thinking Sex"*, 143.

The exchange of sexual services for money, commonly known as prostitution, has been a battleground where culture wars have been fought, and one of the primary ways that sexuality (and the more nebulous immorality) has made its way into our criminal laws.[26] Many of the axiomatic moral and sexual principles that uphold our cultural landscape are both challenged and upheld by the practice of prostitution.[27] Accordingly, the legal and social regulation of commerce surrounding sexual services has long been a societal preoccupation.

Stuart Hall explains that moral panics can be in germination for a long time, and identifies five essential social conditions for the development of a moral panic.[28] These are: (i) a state of preparedness in the state control apparatuses; (ii) a sensitizing of official circles and of the public through mass media; (iii) a perceived danger to social stability; (iv) identification of a vulnerable 'target' group involved in dramatic incidents that trigger public alarm; and (v) the setting in motion of the mechanisms by which conspiratorial demons and criminal folk devils are projected on to the public stage. Hall argues these conditions will all be present when a moral panic erupts. In other words, the nature and reaction to a particular triggering event can only be understood in terms of how ruling-class alliances and private citizens respond to a perceived deepening economic and social crisis. Describing this social phenomenon, Hall argues there is often a connection between a reaction to a *particular* manifestation of political conflict and social discontent and a *general* crisis in hegemony.[29] This framework can help make sense of what might otherwise appear to be overreactions to a particular political conflict.

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[26] Rubin, 143.
[27] See for example James H. Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies*, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1971), Ruth Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women Class and the State* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1980).
[28] Hall, *Policing the Crisis,* 299.
[29] Hall, 299.

In the case of the interwar moral reformers, all five of these conditions were met, interestingly, mostly by church organizations and organized groups of vigilante vice police *not by governments*. By 1922, there was a well-organized network of volunteer organizations that had reconvened since the War and were keen to resume their rescue missions. This network of rescue workers and Magdalene Asylums provided the control apparatuses necessary, Hall's (i) criterion, a state of preparedness in the state control apparatuses, except these were organized by voluntary organizations rather than the government. The volunteer organizations had developed well-organized systems of propaganda, which provided the mechanisms necessary to satisfy requirements (ii)-(v). A sensitizing of official circles and of the public through mass media (ii) was well underway with the propaganda campaigns organized by the Committee in Geneva but executed by volunteer organizations. Prostitution was conceptualized as a danger to social stability and the vulnerable "target group" were travelling women at risk of falling into immorality (iii). These conditions created the propaganda campaigns necessary to project "criminal folk devils and conspiratorial demons" onto the public stage (iv).

Moral reformers saw music halls and working class leisure tantamount to the general conditions of vice in urban centres during the interwar period that were perceived as a danger to social stability. Indeed, there was an understanding that sexual morality was the centre of all economic and social problems. The destruction of the family was understood as a fundamental threat to the capitalist structure and the stability was being threatened by a rising working class along with a continuing increase of immigration and migration to urban centres.

The 1920s were also marked, significantly, by prohibition in the United States.[30] This criminal prohibition on the sale of alcohol had many unintended consequences, including

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[30] Chauncey, *Gay New York*, Kindle Edition. Chapter 11: "Pansies on Parade": Prohibition and the Spectacle of the Pansy, 301-330.

increasing the amount of interracial socializing in underground music halls and cabarets.[31] Similarly in London, the working classes were enjoying more leisure time; along with this change in working class living standards arose moral reformers concerned about vice districts and working class neighbourhoods.[32] In this context, "dancing girls and artistes" became the identified vulnerable 'target' group involved in dramatic incidents that triggered public alarm. This was a shift from the prewar movement, which focused on rural and working-class girls who were at risk of deception by white slavers.

The social hygiene organizations involved in this moral reform work were engaged in prolific propaganda campaigns aimed at sensitizing officials and members of the public through mass media (criterion (ii)). Warnings accompanying images of diseased prostitutes trying to lure innocent soldiers were being published and distributed through an elaborate system of collaboration between moral reformers in the United States and Europe.. The propaganda campaigns also provided the apparatus necessary for Hall's (v) condition: projecting "criminal folk devils and conspiratorial demons" onto the public stage.

2 Prostitution and Gender Norms

2.1 The Flapper Phenomenon

The early 1920s was a period of enormous social change, both in Europe and in North America. The Great War and subsequent influenza epidemics had claimed over 16 million lives, many of which were men, creating a new demographic of single women.[33] Wartime had forced women into the workforce, and the return of peace created a tension between some returning men

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[31] Chauncey, *Gay New York*, Chapter 11.
[32] Prace Bakalarska, "The Influence of Class on Social Life in Britain between the Wars", University of Pardubice Faculty of Arts and Philosophy Department of English and American Studies, Dissertation 2006.
[33] See Susan Grayzel and Tammy Proctor, *Gender and the Great War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

and those women who did not want to give up their jobs.[34] Historians have generally conceded that women in America "made relatively modest political and economic strides during the decade (1920s).[35] However, historians have also maintained that the 1920s represented a period of increased personal freedom for women.[36]

The so-called "new woman" or "flapper girl" burst onto the scene in the 1920s. This was the Roaring Twenties in the United States, and *les années folles* (the crazy years) in France. The Jazz Age was in full swing. As Patricia Raub explains, "[o]ur image of the Twenties woman is that of the flapper, who has thrown off the conventions of her Victorian predecessors to crop her hair, shorten her skirt and dance the Charleston".[37] The "flapper phenomenon" became the subject of "scores of magazine articles", with "young women's appearance and conduct the topic of dinner-table conversations in countless dining rooms across the country".[38] During the 1920s, there was a deliberate transgression of the younger generation in the United States. Young men and women were "challenging conventions and mores of their parents' generation".[39] This transgressive gender performativity was the cause of acute concern of among social conservatives of the 1920s. The traditional American moral position of the 1920s was described by historian Paula Fass as follows:

> The traditionalist saw the end of American civilization as he had known it. Its firm and robust outlines, best symbolized by the stable mother secure in her morality and content in her home, were pushed aside and replaced by the giddy

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[34] Patricia Raub, "A New Woman or an Old-Fashioned Girl? The Portrayal of the Heroine in Popular Women's Novels of the Twenties" *American Studies* 35, no. 1 (Spring, 1994), 112.
[35] Raub, *"A New Woman,"* 112
[36] Raub, 112.
[37] Raub, 109.
[38] Raub, 112.
[39] Raub, 112.

> flapper, rouged and clipped, careening in a drunken stupor to the lewd strains of a jazz quartet.[40]

Raub describes how these social tensions helped develop the "flapper" as the "symbol of hedonism", a symbol of the blatant disregard for traditional moral standards and the unrestrained sexuality of the younger generation.[41]

The flapper became the symbol of the middle-class bohemian culture that was iconic of 1920s New York City. Under prohibition, the cultural landscape of New York City became infamous for its underground cabarets, massive drag balls and music halls.[42] As George Chauncey demonstrates in *Gay New York*, the Prohibition era of the 1920s encouraged an even more casual atmosphere for mixed-sex socializing.[43] Women in the 1920s became dubbed the "new woman" when embracing the new possibilities of sexual subjectivity and joined in the attack on the older generation of women as "sexless spinsters" and "prudes".[44] Chauncey argues that "given its effects on the women's movement, the sexual revolution of the 1910s and 1920s could equally be viewed as a heterosexual counterrevolution".[45]

New York City had become a mecca for gay culture in the 1920s. While the culture was well developed prior to the Great War, the subculture grew immensely after the war.[46] In describing gay male culture in 1920s New York City, Chauncey states

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[40] Raub, 112.
[41] Raub, 112.
[42] Chauncey, *Gay New York*, Kinde Edition, Chapter 11: "Pansies on Parade": Prohibition and the Spectacle of the Pansy, 301-330,.
[43] Chauncey, *Gay New York*, Kinde Edition, 117.
[44] Chauncey, 118.
[45] Chauncey, 118.
[46] Chauncey, 118.

> Gay men had to take precautions, but, like other marginalized peoples, they were able to construct spheres of relative cultural autonomy in the interstices of a city governed by hostile powers.
>
> They forged an immense gay world of overlapping social networks in the city's streets, private apartments, bathhouses, cafeterias, and saloons, and they celebrated that world's existence at regularly held communal events such as the massive drag (or transvestite) balls that attracted thousands of participants and spectators in the 1920s.[47]

By the 1920s, there were three distinct gay neighbourhood enclaves in New York City in Greenwich Village, Harlem and Times Square, each with a different class and ethnic character, gay cultural style and public reputation. Harlem became an enclave for the development of a specifically lesbian subculture in the 1920s. These gay communities were developing within an increasingly diverse urban population.

By 1910, forty percent of the residents in New York City had immigrated from foreign countries.[48] In the 1920s, internal migration within the United States was spurred by "rural depression, agricultural mechanization, and environmental catastrophe" which pushed millions of farmers off their land and forced them to leave their homes in search of work. Many of the gay enclaves developed within larger working class immigrant sections of the city. For example, in Greenwich Village, the first wave into the neighbourhood was largely a population of Italian working class immigrants followed by a subsequent arrival of the gay community.[49]

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[47] Chauncey, *Gay New York*, Kinde Edition, 2.
[48] Chauncey, *Gay New York*, Kinde Edition, 11
[49] Chauncey, 11.

In describing the activities of rescue operations in NYC during the 1920s,Chauncey explains:

> Some of the organizations secured quasi-police powers from the state legislature in order to pursue their objectives; others used their connections with the city's business leaders to put economic pressure on tenement landlords, hotel operators and brewing companies to close clubs and saloons where men and women interacted too freely or women worked as prostitutes.
>
> Reformers hired agents who put the immigration neighbourhoods under surveillance: visiting the saloons, streets, and tenements were men and women gathered; reviewing the moral tenor of the films, stage shows, burlesque routines, and club acts seen by New Yorkers; attending the masquerade balls and other events organized by the city's immigrant, bohemian and gay social clubs to regulate the kinds of costumes worn and dancing allowed.
>
> They also monitored the police and devised elaborate administrative mechanisms to force them to uphold moral regulations they otherwise would ignore.[50]

The systems of surveillance and lobbying developed by these NYC moral reformers were very powerful during the interwar period. The issue of prostitution, or "sex trafficking" became a lightning rod for political debate during the interwar period largely because it related to so many critical social issues of the time.

In the 1920s, the social purity movement was explosively popular, as were campaigns that sought, as Chancey explains, to "reconstruct the moral world by narrowing the boundaries of

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[50] Chauncey, 140.

acceptable sociability and public discourse": The reform campaigns constituted a sweeping assault on the moral order of working-class communities, and especially of single women and rough working-class men, although middle-class entrepreneurs and intellectuals also became their targets at times.[51]

Moral reformers, now calling themselves the "rescue movement" or "abolitionists" defined "prostitution" more broadly than many working-class youths did. "As a result, their campaign against prostitution led reformers to attack not just brothels but saloons, cabarets, and other social venues where men and women transgressed Victorian gender conventions by interacting too casually".[52]

The rescue movement was also keen to maintain racial boundaries and imagined interracial sex as an assault on the honour of white men, white women, as well as possible threat to the purity of the white race. Similarly, the literature that became subject to moral reformers attention was not limited to pornography. "Indecent" was interpreted broadly so that their targets could also include: "birth control literature, medical studies of homosexuality, and plays and short stories with lesbian or other unorthodox sexual themes".[53] The moral reformers also targeted socialist and trade union propaganda as "indecent" during the period.[54]

2.2 Trans-Atlantic Cultural Pollination

There was a particularly close relationship developing between the artistic bohemian communities in New York City and Paris.[55] Paris was seen during the period as the epicentre for

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[51] Chauncey, *Gay New York*, Kinde Edition, 139.
[52] Chauncey, 139.
[53] Chauncey, 139.
[54] Chauncey, 139.
[55] Brooke Lindy Blower, "The Paris of Americans: Transnational Politics and Culture Between the World Wars, A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of Princeton University in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy", Recommended for Acceptance by the Department of History, November 2005, 7.

sexually permissive lifestyles and artistic alternative communities (along perhaps with Berlin). Many Americans became fascinated with the Parisian lifestyle of the 1920s. In describing Americans in Paris during the interwar period, Brooke Blower states: "No less than Europeans, Americans looked to interwar Paris as a source of wisdom and inspiration. Like the enamored E.E. Cummings, citizens from across the Atlantic traveled in droves to the French capital during the twenties and thirties."[56] Technological advances made during the Great War greatly increased the amount of trans-Atlantic travel during the interwar period. Paris was once only available to a small class of American elite. However, in the 1920s, it became "a popular mecca full of clashing social groups and contested mass politics".[57] In describing her first impressions of Paris in 1925, the notorious performer Josephine Baker explains:

> What did I see first? Men and women kissing each other in the streets! In America, you were sent to prison for that! This freedom amused me. Yes, one could kiss in the street, and in the theatres and show themselves without clothing. I could not believe it, so I bought dozens of pictures of nude women."[58]

Young people on both sides of the Atlantic were deliberately transgressing the cultural and sexual norms of the previous generation during the 1920s.

2.3 Moral Reformers and Dancing Girls

Moral reformers during the interwar period were convulsed with concerns over the transgressive gender expressions of the young homosexual men and flapper women. These flappers were mostly white and in the middle and upper classes and were the target of a

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[56]Blower, *"Paris of Americans,"*, 7.
[57] Blower, 17.
[58] Jean-Claude Baker and Chrise Chase, *Josephine: The Hungry Heart* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2001), Kindle Edition, 102. Josephine Baker was a Black American woman who moved to Paris and achieved fame as the star in Le Revue Negre.

disproportionate attention from moral reformers during the interwar period. The white slavery scare before the war had resulted in a large body of criminal laws targeting prostitution and immorality. The moral reformers in interwar urban centres used these laws against "immorality" to specifically target "traveling troupes of dancing girls".

In fact, these troupes of dancing girls were the first issue discussed at the League of Nations in relation to international sex trafficking. The connection between prostitution and "dancing girls" was made immediately at the first meeting of the League in 1922, when the Committee unanimously decided to include "travelling troupes of dancing girls" within the ambit of their jurisdiction because they allegedly ran such a high risk of "falling into immorality".

During the interwar period, under the auspices of protecting women and girls from falling into immorality, moral reformers, such as les Amies a religious organization started by Swiss women, raided music halls and cabarets in search of immoral practices. These moral reformers were private actors who raided music halls and cabarets without warrant and on their own accord in search of immorality- broadly construed. These moral reformers would conduct warrantless raids of music halls and cabarets, attempt to persuade dancing girls to reform their lifestyles, and shut down any establishment that did not conform to the morality clause within the standard industry employment contract.

This is just one example of how the mythology of the prostitute worked its way into the moral reformers' campaign against interracial socializing, homosexuals and flappers more generally during the interwar period. The pre-war moral panic that erupted surrounding white slavery resulted in a plethora of criminal and employment laws that sought to regulate sexuality under the auspices of protecting women from sexual exploitation. These laws against prostitution and sex trafficking were broadly drafted to include "immorality" or "other immoral acts" within their ambit.

2.4 The Great Femininity Paradox of Rescue Work

Many middle-class women built careers essentially studying immigrant and working-class women. Mariana Valverde explains this phenomenon before the war in Canada in the following way:

> The great paradox about femininity formation in/through moral reform campaigns was that certain middle-class women made careers out of studying "the problem" of the immigrant woman or the urban girl. These women doctors, social workers, deaconesses and Salvation Army officers travelled freely around the city, protected, and perhaps did not realize that their unprecedented freedom was built on the prior assumption that ordinary women were helpless objects in need of study and reform. The pure woman did not gain her purity exclusively through silence, chastity and seclusion: she was partially public.[59]

After the Great War, this paradox intensified as the rescue movement gained momentum domestically with increased state funding and transnationally as a tool of imperial moral policing in the colonies. David Courtwright notes that while vice had become steam-propelled before the War, so had reform attempting to counter it.[60] The traffickers were no longer travelling by horse and buggy or sail, but by much faster steamboats. With the globalization of vice, there was a simultaneous emergence of transnational reform networks during the same era:

> Railroads, steamships, and ocean-spanning canals sped missionaries to their destinations, and sped home their reports of opium, liquor, prostitution and other evils that ruined natives' health and frustrated Christian conversion […]

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[59] Baker and Chase, *Josephine: The Hungry Heart,* 102.
[60] Courtwright, *Global Anti-Vice Activism,* 314.

> Middle-class reformers became globetrotters, crossing oceans in search of new ideas, new converts, and new allies.[61]

In this manner, the opportunities opened up to middle-class missionary women and moral reformers that were otherwise rare for women of any class or race during the period. The rescue movement provided a space for white middle-class women to work outside of the home, in an occupation that still satisfied their strict moral codes. However, through the moral reform work itself, these women were simultaneously upholding and challenging traditional roles of women. Rescue work continued to be an "upper- and middle-class pursuit, while they [white middle-class women] focused on reforming women almost exclusively from the ranks of the poor.[62]

2.5 Gendering of Punishment: The Female Penitentiary System

The social purity movement was a broad movement that still had many male moral reformers within its ranks. However, in the narrower categories of rescue work and railway missions, the volunteer organizations were populated predominately by women. This "rescue work" essentially comprised two elements: (i) patrolling spaces such as vice districts and railway stations for fallen women; and (ii) operating rescue homes. The rescue homes, the above-described Magdalene Asylums, were generally run by women and based upon the Christian ideology of reformation through penance. While women's penitentiaries were also in operation during the period, these rescue homes housed women who committed moral offenses, women who were not ascribing to the social standards expected of them.

> The Female Penitentiary or "Magdalene" system […] shows women in a less attractive light. To their discredit they were, if anything, more active in

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[61] Courtwright, 314.
[62] Finnegan, *Penance or Perish,* 14. See also Amanda Glasbeek, *Feminized Justice, The Toronto Women's Court, 1913-34* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).

> the Movement than were men. In England, it was the women who became "Street Missionaries", distributing tracts and inviting prostitutes to enter a Home. It was they who attended magistrates' courts, visited brothels and combed maternity and Lock wards of workhouses and hospitals, seeking out the fallen and persuading them to undergo reform. And in the Refuges themselves, it was women who became most active- with Ladies' Committees increasingly contributing to their overall management and female staff being responsible for the day-to-day running of the homes.[63]

During the 1920s and 1930s, "the Magdalene Movement experienced something of a revival, and ambitions for expanding and consolidating the system soared".[64] This happened in the context of greater state involvement in the moral reform movement. During the period, there was a marked increase in official cooperation with moral reform movements. Police and moral reformers were working more closely together to police the boarder and vice districts. With this increased collaboration, the Magdalene Asylums started to be used by the state as a private Female Penitentiary System. Increasingly, courts were sentencing women to reform at rescue homes. These institutions were run by religious organizations, not the state. There was an understanding that "these penitents were in the hands of the religious, and it was not for the ordinary citizen, or even government to interfere".[65] This resulted in a paradoxical relationship between the state and the Magdalene Movement during the interwar period. The courts and law enforcement increasingly used the rescue homes as an alternative female penitentiary system for all those women considered

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[63] Finnegan, *Penance or Perish,* 16.
[64] Finnegan, 112.
[65] Finnegan, *Penance or Perish,* 90.

immoral or fallen. Simultaneously, these institutions were still viewed as religious in nature, and were not regulated or inspected by the state.

The Female Penitentiary System punished women much differently than the secular state-run prisons and labour camps punished men. There was far greater emphasis on penance, of cleansing one's soul from the sins of her past. In describing the purpose of a rescue home for women in Dublin, one pamphlet stated:

> "Instead of loathsome disease these reclaimed individuals will enjoy the blessings of health, they will exchange gross ignorance for useful knowledge, the pangs of guilt for peace of mind, the base drudgery of prostitution for profitable employment in innocent recreations […] Instead of being detested pests of society, they will be useful and well-regarded members of it. In short, instead of Devils, they will become Christians".[66] The methods employed by these rescue homes were shockingly severe. All inmates were called "children", forced to work long hours, attend religious ceremonies and adhere to a strict and constant rule of silence.[67] Actual children were systematically removed from their mothers and adopted by so-called proper Christian families. Shame and constant self-flagellation were the primary tools of discipline used in this Female Penitentiary System.

2.5.1 Criminalization of *Souteneurs*

During the interwar period there was a strong push to increase penalties for men engaged in the business of prostitution. These men became known as "*souteneurs*," a French legal term of art that was used by the Committee to refer to men who lived off the earnings of prostitution. The Committee used this particular term because it excluded women from its ambit. Because brothels

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[66] Finnegan, 18.
[67] Finnegan, 18.

were still legal in some member countries, like France, the female managers of brothels were carved out of the definition so that the rules could apply even in countries where prostitution was legal. Led by feminists, there was a call to increase penalties on men. This campaign was picked up enthusiastically by governments who were "intent on expanding the police power of national governments".[68] The crime of "living on the immoral earnings of a woman" became a key law enforcement tool during the interwar period. This crime fell under the general category of vagrancy offences. Law enforcement found it easier to police for "living off the immoral earnings" rather than procuring (the actual purchase of sexual services). Because "living on immoral earnings" is a habitual state of being, a person could be arrested at any time simply for appearing to have no means of subsistence.

The category of "*souteneurs*" provided law enforcement with increased powers to harass, criminalize and arrest working class immigrants and men of colour in urban centers. Further, by focusing on men who were "living on the immoral earnings of women", the moral reformers were targeting a working-class iteration of masculinity that the reformers did not approve of. Some working-class women would engage in sex work periodically in order to support their families. Studies of prostitution at the turn of the century indicate that approximately 20% (400/2000) women who engaged in sex work were also married.[69] Rather than protect these women from sexual exploitation, the laws against *souteneurs* criminalized relationships with any woman engaged in sex work.

Criminal punishments for *souteneurs* were extremely harsh during the period. While women were being sent to Rescue Homes to be reformed, men were being sent to labour camps,

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[68] Cromwell, *Global Anti-Vice Activism,* 315.
[69] Emma Goldman, "The Traffic of Women, in Anarchism and Other Essays" (1910), republished in *Hastings Women's Law Review* 13, no. 9 (2002)

internment camps, jails, or they were simply deported. Special courts were established to deal with "vagrants", and many European governments established work camps and segregated areas for those considered undesirable. The differentiation of punishment between men and women during the period perpetuated as well as created gender norms regarding appropriate masculinity and femininity. It also produced the false assumption that women were not being incarcerated as much as men.

Moral reformers had begun to focus their attention more acutely on the family structures in the urban working class. Gender was being formed and challenged in paradoxical ways by moral reformers but woven into this project was an inherent classist attitude of middle and upper class white moral reformers.

3 Prostitution and Class

The process of class formation is a dialectical process; it takes place in the bourgeoisie as much as in the working class, and often through the same practices.[70] While outwardly imposing values on another class, Valverde explains this imposition of moral values is simultaneously a process of creating and reaffirming one's own class.[71] Like their social purity predecessors, interwar moral reformers sought to establish a non-antagonistic capitalist class structure, not to erase class differences.[72] The moral reformers were often women in the middle classes who could make careers out of studying "the problem" of the immigrant woman or the urban girl.[73]

The symbolic role of prostitution played an important role in the perception of vice during the interwar period. Similar to the turn of the Century, the issue of prostitution had been firmly embedded as the most clear example of female vice, and this image was used to police the working

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[70] Valverde, *Light, Soap and Water,* 29.
[71] Valverde, 29.
[72] Valverde, 29.
[73] Valverde, 29.

classes, particularly working-class immigrants. [74] At the level of myth and allegory, there was a strict gendering of vice during the interwar period. Working class males were seen as potential vagrants, alcoholics and otherwise criminal whereas females of the working class were evaluated according to their perceived distance from the paradigmatic female working-class vice, prostitution.[75]

Well before the interwar period there were empirical studies being published finding that economic necessity was the main cause of prostitution. As early as 1895, a study was published that concluded the system of vice was, in many cases, a direct result of insufficient compensation for other so-called honest labour.[76] Likewise, in describing the economic conditions as one of the most important root causes of prostitution, a doctor writing in the early twentieth century, Alfred Blaschko, concluded that the root causes of prostitution during the nineteenth century included poverty and unemployment in an urban environment.[77] The role of economics in driving prostitution was also recognized by Havelock Ellis well before the interwar period when he concluded that "the servant girl, being treated as a drudge, never having the right to herself, and worn out by the caprices of her mistress, can find an outlet, like the factory of shop girl, only in prostitution".[78]

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[74] Valverde, 78.
[75] Valverde, 78.
[76]Goldman, *"Traffic of Women,"* 12 "Although prostitution has existed in all ages, it was left to the nineteenth century to develop it into a gigantic social institution. The development of industry with vast masses of people in the competitive market, the growth and congestion of large cities, the insecurity and uncertainty of employment, has given prostitution an impetus never dreamed of at any period in human history".
[77] Goldman does not provide a citation for this study in her 1910 article. She does, however, describe him and his work at footnote 8: "Alfred Blaschko (1858-1922) was a German physician and author whose published works addressed health issues relating to prostution. He helped establish the first German Society for the Fight Against Venereal Diseases, in Berlin (1902). His works include *Hygiene der Prostitution und der venerischen Krankheiten*, *Syphillis und Prositution von Stendpunkte der Oeffentlichen*, and *Die Prostitution in 19. Jahrundert*.", 12.
[78] Goldman, 12.

3.1 Mythology of the Whore of Modern Babylon

The symbol of the prostitute allowed moral reformers to mobilize the mythology of the whore of Babylon in their campaigns against vice districts.[79] Valverde explains, "from biblical prophecies to today's mass media *exposés* of vice, the theme of the vicious woman as symbolizing or representing the fallen city has been a powerful one".[80] The moral reformers frequently refer to modern Babylon, in describing social conditions in urban centres. For example, the *exposé* that caused an explosion of public concern in England about white slavery in 1885 was entitled "The Maiden of Modern Babylon".[81]

Babylon was a popular analogy used by moral reformers when describing urban centres where working class people enjoyed their increased leisure time. The beginning of the twentieth century was marked by the establishment of trade unions and, by the early 1920s, ordinary workers were spending more free time enjoying leisure activities.[82] Moral reformers, concerned with the social impacts of this increased leisure time of the working classes, zealously employed this image of the fallen city of Babylon. A social activity was judged according to its likelihood of increasing prostitution, though immorality was seen as an airborne virus that permeated entire vice districts with dangerous ubiquity. The prostitute was a symbol of the pinnacle of Babylonian culture, but also as a carrier of dangerously infectious immorality. The sexuality of the prostitute was conceptualized as extremely dangerous, and entire urban neighbourhoods were morally contaminated with mere proximity to *her*.

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[79] Valverde *Light, Soap and Water,* 78.
[80] Valverde, 78.
[81] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*.
[82] Bakalarska, "Influence of Class," 8.

4 Prostitution and Race: Racial Underpinnings of National Purity Campaigns

The white slavery scare was an inherently racist moral panic spurred on by changes in demographics in urban centers. In researching the moral reformers in Canada, Valverde explains:

> I had not set out to look for racialization: indeed when I began to research Canada's "white slavery panic" I had anticipated that sex, gender and ethnicity would be important- but it was only when I had concluded my research that I realized "white" was the really crucial word in the term, and that the moral panic about white slavers owed much of its success to its role in constructing Canada as white and whiteness as Canadian.[83]

In national campaigns, the "white slavery scare" was a convenient metaphor and euphemism to express white citizens' concerns over increased immigration and changing cultural norms of city life.

Campaigns against sex trafficking after the Great War maintained a clear racial and ethnic organization. The "whiteness" that was favoured in campaigns for purity before the war, were still favoured by moral reformers in the 1920s and 1930s. Valvaerde explains "the "whiteness" employed by the movement was not merely spiritual but also designated (consciously or unconsciously) a skin colour".[84] In this same way Valverde explains that the interwar transnational purity movement "contributed to the general climate of racism".[85]

While the particular race being targeted depended on the location of the moral reformers, the regulation of sexuality has always been linked to racial and population policies.[86] For example,

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[83] Valverde *Light, Soap and Water,* 13.
[84] Valverde *Light, Soap and Water,* 32.
[85] Valverde 32.
[86] Valverde 32.

in America the *White Slave Act* was used, perversely, to perpetuate anti-black racism. Many interracial couples (black men and white women) travelling across state lines were arrested for travelling for an "immoral purpose".[87] That "immoral purpose" was interracial sexual relations. While during the same period, many moral reformers in London focused their racial profiling towards the Chinese population. Historian Barbara Bush explains:

> Popular narratives of miscegenation evoked images of predatory 'oriental' men mingling on the 'dark side' of London and other British ports with the new, sexually 'loose' flappers and degenerate 'dope' girls. The Chinese opium dens of London's Limehouse were constructed as the site of the corruption of white women, and the predatory sexuality of Chinese men was a 'relentlessly reiterated theme' in popular culture.[88]

Likewise in many countries in Europe during the period, there was a common conception of the "white slaver" as a Jewish man.[89] This stereotype of deviant Jewish masculinity was used to spur panic and rapid anti-Semitism during the period.[90] Hitler himself claimed that the holocaust was inspired by a single moment in Vienna when he witnessed a Jewish white slaver and his prostitutes.[91] The interwar transnational purity movement contributed to this general climate of racism in dramatic ways during the interwar period. The image of the white slaver was a powerful

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[87] See David Langum, *Crossing Over the Line: Legislating Morality and the Mann Act*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[88] Barbara Bush, "Gender and Empire in the Twentieth Century" in ed. Philippa Levine, *Gender and Empire* (Oxford, 2004), 3.
[89] See for example a popular novel of the day "Le chemin de Buenos-Ayres" which was used in 1929 as proof of the *souteneurs*' physical prowess and wealth.
[90] See Julia Roos, *The Origins and Dynamics of Nazi Prostitution Policies,* in *Sexuality and German Fascism*, ed. Dagmar Herzog, (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 79 where she states: "The Nazis were keenly aware of the propagandistic potential of the issue of prostitution and used the backlash against the 1927 reform to advance their own political agenda".
[91] Roos, "Nazi Prostitution Policy", 79: "Hitler stressed that his observation of Jewish procurers in Vienna had converted him to anti-Semitism. "When thus for the first time I recognized the Jew as the cold-hearted, shameless and calculating director of this revolting vice traffic in the scum of the big city, a cold shudder ran down my back", quoting "Bordelle fur die Innestadt", Der Angriff, January 2, 1928.

one that continued to inspire racist moral outrage in communities, neighbourhoods and individuals based entirely on their race. The discourse of moral purity encompassed thinly veiled racist objectives of white purity and supremacy.

In interwar Euro-American moral reform campaigns, the focus was squarely on restrictive immigration policy and increased policing powers of urban neighbourhoods. Moral reformers had a significant impact on immigration policy during the interwar period, building on their successes from before the war. Immigrants were subjected to strict medical and moral inspection. Some of the interwar legal inventions to police immigrant populations were extremely harsh. Interwar legislative efforts focused on increased police powers to deport immoral immigrants and increased powers to police urban neighborhoods and immigrant populations.

For example, many countries adopted a policy of immediately deporting all foreign-born prostitutes who were found in raids conducted specifically for this purpose. Even in countries where prostitution was otherwise legal, foreign women were criminalized, and immediately deported simply for engaging in this otherwise legal activity. Similarly, the criminal category of *souteneur* allowed moral reformers and police to target any man who they thought might not be living a moral life. The moral reformers searched the streets for immoral men. They were in search for men who appeared to be vagrants, who were not ascribing to norms of masculinity that moral reformers were intent on promulgating. These legal categories were exceedingly broad, and it is no accident that moral reformers inordinately targeted immigrant and minority communities.

4.1 Imperial Campaigns of Virtuous White Womanhood

While the Euro-American moral campaigns continued to perpetuate and invent racial stereotypes and criminal categories within their national laws, the moral reform movement became exceedingly transnational during the interwar period. With this global expansion, the racist ideology and enforcement of morality campaigns took to the British and American colonies with

a new vigor. The purpose of these sex trafficking campaigns was not to protect or uplift Indigenous women in the colonies. The purpose instead was to continue to define, assert and mold the identity of the white savior bringing sexual purity and Christ to the heathens.

Barbara Bush, in *Gender and Empire*, explains that the "anxieties about the moral fiber of the post-war generation of men under-score how the integrity of Empire still depended on 'superior' white masculinities".[92] The role of white women had increased in the colonies after the Great War. There was a general trend to "feminize Imperialism". Bush describes this trend:

> Domesticity, marriage and appropriate gender roles remained central to imperial stability. Eugenicists believed that single men and women who delayed marriage were failing their racial duty to reproduce the white race. Single women were regarded as an economic and sexual threat ('amazons' and 'flappers') and masculinity was still defined through marriage and paternal responsibility which conferred full adulthood…
>
> In contemporary pro-Imperialist imagery, virtuous white womanhood symbolized the importance of the white. Dominions, reflecting women's central role in "domesticating the heart of the wild", taming marauding 'frontier masculinities' and security the stability and racial purity of the white Empire.[93]

Emigration of women was enthusiastically encouraged after 1918 as a way of building up a strong white Empire.[94] In this context, sex trafficking laws became extremely useful for moral reformers and missionaries in the colonies to police the sexuality of the Indigenous populations. While the movement was no longer explicitly hunting

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[92] Bush, *"Gender and Empire,"* 8.
[93] Bush, *"Gender and Empire,"* 86-87.
[94] Bush, 86-87.

white slavers, the racial stereotypes underpinning the interwar movement remained blatantly clear.

5 Chapter Outlines

5.1 Early Days 1922-1927

The Early Days Chapter narrates the first five years of the Committee. This is the period of time when a broad “anti-vice” policy was adopted in Geneva. While the country representatives were debating whether prostitution should be "regulated” or “abolished”, the members of the Committee were simultaneously making significant gains in other areas of what was known before the Great War as “rescue work”.

The Early Days Chapter argues that the Committee was engaged in a broad campaign to govern the sexuality of the younger generations, while policing vice districts and railway stations for “immorality”, twin censorship and propaganda campaigns were mushrooming around Europe and North America in the interwar period to encourage chastity and virtue. The rescue movement was involved in much more than agitating for the abolition of regulated brothels, and many of these tenets were adopted as official policy in Geneva during the first five years. At the same time, the interwar rescue movement had undergone some important changes from its prewar predecessor.

The Americans took the lead in directing international sex trafficking policy in Geneva. The system of vice policing that was established in urban centres in the United States was being exported to Europe with the League operating as a hub of communication and organization. Under the stewardship of the American moral purity reformers, the Committee increasingly focused its attention on obscenity policing and moral reform propaganda campaigns. This chapter narrates how the propaganda campaign of the American Social Hygiene Society was exported to Europe, with the coordination of the League Secretariat Dame Rachel Crowdy and members of the

Committee. Likewise, this Chapter narrates how the Committee gained jurisdiction over the administration of the 1923 *Obscenity Convention*, and in so doing encouraged broad censorship of political, artistic and literary material.

The First Enquiry, published in 1926, set out the ideological tenets of the rescue movement under the auspices of empirical facts. The First Enquiry conceptualized prostitution as a moral problem, which required the close collaboration of rescue workers to solve.[95] Not surprisingly one of the issues moral reformers were unable to garner support for in Geneva was alcohol. There were some Committee members who agitated for alcoholism to be included within the ambit of issues discussed by the Committee. European country representatives who would not support prohibition of alcohol in principle continually rejected this request. However, once the First Enquiry was published, the Committee stated that it believed there was established proof that alcohol increases the likelihood of "immorality". Therefore, in 1927, the Committee approved a resolution to control the drinking of all foreign-born "dancing girls".

5.2 Glory Years 1927-1932

The publication of the First Enquiry led to a swell of public interest in the subject of prostitution across nations and launched the Committee into the next phase of work that took place from 1927-1932, what I call the Glory Years. The most productive and coordinated period of work for the Committee were these years when the rescue movement gained the most momentum and developed a system of surveillance and control that resulted in entire vice districts being shut down at local levels in Europe. For example, even local actors in France (whose government adamantly insisted on maintaining legal prostitution on the national level) managed to shut down brothel

[95] League of Nations Report of the Special Body of Experts on Traffic in Women and Children: Part One (February 17, 1927), C.52, M.52.1927.IV.[C.T.F.E./Experts/55] League of Nations Archive Geneva, Switzerland ("First Enquiry").

districts in three French cities during the period. This chapter narrates the period of the Committee's tenure, with a focus on the political tactics that made the rescue movement so successful.

Looking first to Geneva, the members on the Committee had been working and living together in Geneva for five years. They were politically active and working on subcommittees, propaganda tours and international conferences held by the volunteer organizations throughout the year when they were not participating in the annual meetings in Geneva. Political alliances, indeed, it appears personal relationships, were forming in Geneva among the Committee members. The Geneva Group engaged in sophisticated political maneuvering; focusing on moral regulation of the population rather than abolishing legal brothels. They recognized that if international focus was on cooperating with local actors to shut down vice districts in urban centres, it was unnecessary to lobby for changes to criminal laws.

At the same time, collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the issue of "dancing girls" was starting to bear fruit. The ILO was responsible for drafting a standard employment contract to be used by all European professional associations sending women abroad to work in cabarets or music halls. Because of collaboration with the Geneva Group, this contract included a broad morality clause including a prohibition on tipping, drinking and "immorality". Rescue workers used this employment contract as the legal instrument to conduct searches of music halls, cabarets and other establishments where "dancing girls" worked. In other words, these rescue workers were using employment law to justify warrantless searches to ensure that there was no risk of a woman "falling into immorality". This strategy allowed rescue workers essentially open access to search business establishments they feared did not maintain appropriate moral standards.

The expansion of the railway mission network after the First Enquiry happened organically and strategically. Politicians were increasingly aware of the presence of rescue workers in their urban centres. Gradually there was an interest by local police forces to collaborate with these rescue workers. Leaders of the volunteer organizations would conduct propaganda tours to encourage the development of rescue missions throughout Europe. When they were not in Geneva, these Committee Members could be found throughout Europe, holding what they called public lantern meetings and meeting with local officials. These lantern meetings were held at dark and theatrical metaphors for bringing light to the sinners and Christ back into public life. The lanterns were representations of the moral purity these missionaries sought to bring to the dark and nefarious vice districts.

5.3 The Reorganization of 1933

Chapter 4 focuses on a shift that occurred in Geneva during 1933. This chapter argues that the Glory Years were interrupted by three main changes, the Great Depression, increased focus on sending rescue missions to the "Far East," and a reorganization of the Committee that took place in 1933, explored in the next chapter. During the second meeting of the Committee in 1923, it was decided that they would separate into two Committees, one focused on sex trafficking and the other focusing on children's welfare more generally. The reorganization of 1933 was seeking to consolidate the work of these two committees into one, while at the same time changing the membership and procedures of this reconstituted committee. The changes that resulted from the Reorganization led to a dramatic reduction in the number of issues discussed each year in Geneva. It also led to an increase in government representatives and a demotion for the women representing volunteer organizations.

This shift in power relations on the Committee had a gradual but profound impact on the way that the issue of prostitution was conceptualized on the Committee. With this power shift,

psychiatrists were brought in to consult on the best ways to rehabilitate prostitutes. The medical model was replacing the moral and religious model for understanding prostitution. The discourse of “fallen women”, so common before the reorganization, was being slowly replaced with discussions on the “feeble minded” prostitute. The culmination of this position can be found in the 1937 Report on the Rehabilitation of Adult Prostitutes. Within this report, we witness the psychological language of “feeble mindedness” replace the previous discourse on “fallen women” and reclamation through penance.

5.4 The Imperial Rescue Project

The Reorganization had an unintended consequence for the rescue movements in the colonies, which the final chapter explores. While women were being demoted in Geneva in 1932, they were being given license to continue to run rescue operations in the so- called “Far East”, which included the colonial holdings of Imperial governments of the period including France, the British Empire, Netherlands and Japan. With the end of the Great War, there was a corresponding campaign by many colonial governments to encourage women to move to the colonies. There was a philosophy that women were needed to “feminize” the empire. Within this context, the rescue movement gradually set its sights on and sent its rescue workers to the colonies.

A Second Enquiry was published in 1932, which was an extension of the First Enquiry into the so-called “Far East”. The Imperial Years (1932-1937) provide an even starker example of how the League was engaged in a project of sexuality governance based on a hierarchical model of assumed white supremacy and sexual morality. Even the structure of the Second Enquiry reveals the primacy given to white women, who are discussed first, followed by all other races. Upon slight reflection the ultimate purpose of the Second Enquiry is apparent: to determine whether there was another “white slavery scare” in the so-called “Far East”. In the end, the only issue from

the Second Enquiry that garnered attention in Geneva is that of Russian (white) women in Harbin, China.[96]

While they were operating under an inherently racist and white supremacist set of laws and policies, feminists were simultaneously making significant in-roads into colonial policy and even colonial police forces as a result of their organizing around the issue of sex trafficking. The Imperial Years shed light on the uncomfortable fact that these early feminists were making significant strides in a deeply racist regime of sexuality governance.

Committee discussion and analysis of Asian women was at once less moralizing and more sociologically informed, in part because of the recognition that the predicaments of trafficked women were tied to gender relations in which women were deeply devalued. This insight is entirely missing in the discussion about European sex work, despite the fact that similarly unequal gender relations were operating in Europe during the period. Yet, because the Committee were describing societies that it thought (comparatively) barbaric, unequal and deeply problematic gender relations were seen by the Committee.

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[96] League of Nations Traffic in Women and Children Committee Eleventh Session, Minutes of the Meeting held at Geneva, April 4th, 1934, C.T.F.E.11thSession/P.V.1 ("1934 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland; League of Nations, Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, Report of the Work of the Commission in 1933, Report of the Joint Session of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and Child Welfare Committee, held at Geneva, March 31st to April 5th 1933, C247,M129. 1933. IV. (C.P.E.416(1). C.T.F.E.602(1).) (C.T.F.E.604(1).C.P.E.428(1).) Erratum ("1933 Joint Reorg Session"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland; League of Nations Traffic in Women and Children Committee Report on the Work of its Fourteenth Session, Report by the Representative of Chile, Fourteenth Session, Report of the Meeting held at Geneva, May 21st, 1935, C.227.1935.IV. ("1935 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland; League of Nations Advisory Commission for the Protection of Children and Young People, Report on the Work of the Commission in 1936, held in Geneva, May 5th, 1936, C.204.M.127.1936.IV. (Series of League of Nations Publications IV.Social.1936.IV.3.), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland; League of Nations Advisory Committee on Social Questions, Report of the Work of the Committee's First Session, Report by the Representative of Chile, held in Geneva, May 26th, 1937, C.251.1937.IV. ("1937 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland. Commission of Enquiry into Traffic in Women and Children in the East, Report to Council December 10, 1932, C.849M.393.1932.IV.[C.T.F.E./Orient 89(1).], League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland ("The Second Enquiry").

5.5 Conclusion

To recap, the narrative of the interwar rescue movement and the Committee in Geneva lays bare what Valverde calls the "great femininity paradox of rescue work", this early women's movement benefited white middle class rescue workers, at the expense of those women they were ostensibly "rescuing". This is an important lesson of the interwar rescue movement, and it is an uncomfortable one for many feminists: this remarkably successful early feminist campaign was inherently classist and racist. An entire rescue industry developed transnationally during the interwar period, and this opened up new space for women to participate in public policy. There were exciting opportunities for women to travel, to work, all within the strict social norms they ascribed to as women. These women managed to accede to positions of international policy making that was assumed impossible during the period.

The campaigns for equal penalties for men and women, and for increased women police officers were clearly feminist in nature. Yet, the result of these campaigns was to empower white middle class women at the expense of immigrant and racialized women. This expense was great as they were literally being hunted in vice districts and railway stations and encouraged to reform themselves into virtuous Christian women by entering a rescue home. The rescue movement was not only criminalizing immigrant women, it was simultaneously incarcerating them in religious institutions that operated largely outside of the rule of law, yet the legal system had no trouble feeding women into. This shadow system of morality regulation was insidious in so many ways, including the fact that it was economically and otherwise beneficial for the white middle class women missionaries who ran it.

The character of the "white slaver" that was subject of the prewar moral reformers underwent some important developments and changes during the interwar period. First, there was a move away from viewing the "white slaver" as Jewish, and a push instead to characterize

"traffickers" more broadly as dangerous, non-white immigrants and working-class men. The "white slaver" of the prewar reform campaigns was mostly the subject of exaggerated news reports and novels. The so-called *souteneur* of the interwar period, on the other hand, was also the subject of reports, and studies and debates and subcommittees, all of which are preserved in the archival record. The fictional character of the "white slaver" was transformed by the work on the Committee into the "trafficker", a reiteration of the "white slaver" folk devil from before the war. In other words, each time a moral reform campaign summons forth a folk devil to operate as the scapegoat for social anxieties, that character undergoes development and changes that are preserved until the next summoning.

In addition to folklore, this history provides us with a warning: sex trafficking can be a dangerously explosive issue. The interwar rescue movement demonstrates how combustible the combination of religion, feminism and the state can be when they are allied in targeting sexual immorality in immigrant and working-class communities. Prostitution as a social issue operates as a ganglion of social anxieties. When the right combinations of social nerves are agitated, it is likely that another wave of panic will develop surrounding sex trafficking. Prostitution also operates as a convenient metaphor and guise to conduct law enforcement campaigns in urban centres. In times of great social stress when people are likely to get dangerously crazy about sexuality, the folklore of 'sexual slavery' is likely to resurface once again. Next time, we would do well to heed the lessons of our foremothers' intrepid missteps.

Chapter 2

Early Days: 1922-1926

I don't say all I think in the opinion

-Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.[97]

We have met in order to revive, as far as we are able, the ideal of sex morality, for the sexual problem is the centre of everything: all social, ethical and economic problems spring from it.

–Dr. Ude, International Bureau, 1924[98]

6 Introduction

1922 was the first year the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children met in Geneva, Switzerland.[99] This was the year that, in the words of Stuart Hall, "the wider historical narrative intersect[ed] with our more limited concerns" because we see a second summoning of the folk devil.[100] The League's Committee was only one moment in a longer history of rescue movements, with which it shared many characteristics. Most notably, the moral panic surrounding the "white slave trade" erupted at in the late 1880s and carried through

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[97] Letter from Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr, to Harold J. Laski (May 21, 1921), in *Holmes-Laski Letters: The Correspondence of Mr. Justice Holmes and Harold J. Laski 1916-1935* ed. Mark DeWolfe Howe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press,1963), 262, quoted by Dan Kahan, "The Secret Ambition of Deterrence" (1999), 113:2 *Harvard Law Review* 113, no. 2, 414.

[98] League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Protection of Children, Minutes of the Fourth Session, held at Geneva from May 20th to May 27th 1925, C.382.M.126.1925.IV. ("1925 Minutes"); Report of the International Bureau, Report of the Sixth International Congress for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children, Dr. Ude Opening Address, (held at Graz (Austria), on September 18th, 19th, 20th, 1924), Geneva, League of Nations Archive, at 11.

[99] League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children Minutes of the First Session held at Geneva, Switzerland from June 28-July 1 1922, C.445M.265.1922.IV. ("1922 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland.

[100] Hall, Policing the Crisis.

to the start of the Great War. Most historical scholarship focuses on this period, when social anxiety and the corresponding social purity movement were at their peak.[101] This chapter shifts that focus by examining the rescue movement in the period following WWI and after the League was established from 1922 to 1926.

The first five years of the Committee (1922-1926, referred to here as the "Early Days") were foundational for its future work. The Committee was interested in expanding its mandate in these early days to include many of the social issues its members wanted to police. The First Enquiry was an enormous project undertaken by the League to study prostitution in twenty-eight different countries.[102] The final report linked licensed houses to international trafficking.[103] It also however, linked international trafficking to all the other social issues of concern to members of the Committee. These issues included vice districts, alcohol, obscenity, and young women who travelled to perform in cabarets, as well as music halls.

This chapter details how both groups, the so-called abolitionists and regulationists, were ultimately concerned with governing and controlling the sexuality of the younger generation. Those who advocated voluntary organizations acted as the ones on the front lines of this governance structure were the "abolitionists". Those who advocated for state control and policing were "regulationists". While the two camps had differing views on the role of the state in regulating prostitution, they shared very similar ideology and goals.

Figure 1: 1922 Committee Makeup

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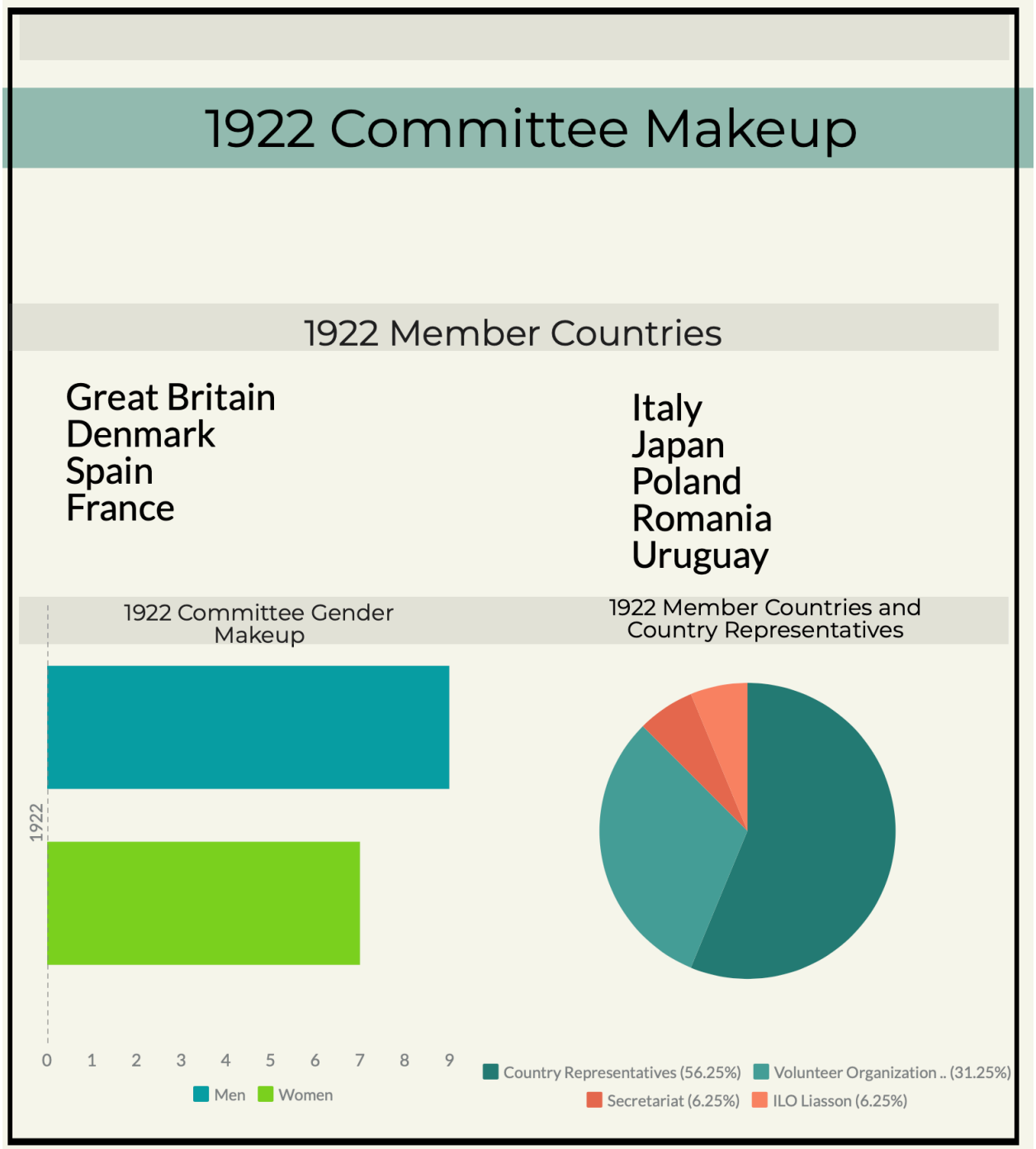
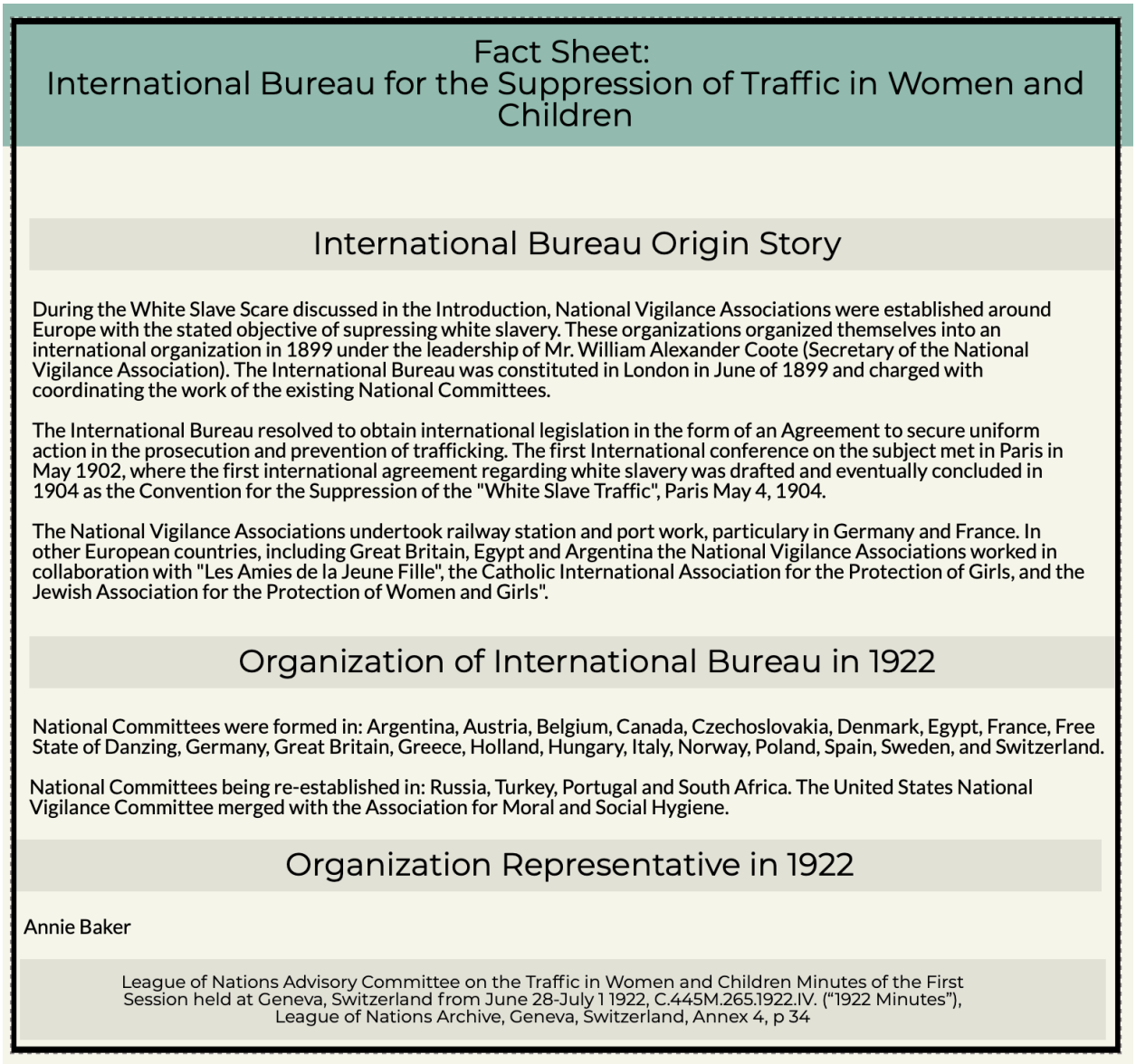
[101] For a review of some of this literature, see the Introduction.
[102] Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, Algeria, Tunis, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United States, Uruguay, see , First Enquiry.
[103] See Knepper, "Sociological Jurisprudence", Limoncella, "First International Movement", Gorman, "Empire, Internationalism", Pliley, "Claims to Protection", Garcia, "Moral Recruitment of Women".



The members of the Committee were a mix of representatives of both volunteer organizations and governments (see Figure 1 above). The volunteer organizations represented on the Committee were extremely powerful. Essentially the Committee included representatives of all the Catholic and Protestant missions around the globe (see the Figure 2: Fact Sheet of each Volunteer Organization below). They also included representatives of vice commissions and other

social purity organizations that ended up dictating the policy direction of the Committee including both the International Bureau and the American Association of Social Hygiene. The Committee effectively had a global army of morality police populated from volunteer organizations ready to carry out its directions.

Figure 2: Fact Sheet for International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children



Fact Sheet:
International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children

International Bureau Origin Story

During the White Slave Scare discussed in the Introduction, National Vigilance Associations were established around Europe with the stated objective of supressing white slavery. These organizations organized themselves into an international organization in 1899 under the leadership of Mr. William Alexander Coote (Secretary of the National Vigilance Association). The International Bureau was constituted in London in June of 1899 and charged with coordinating the work of the existing National Committees.

The International Bureau resolved to obtain international legislation in the form of an Agreement to secure uniform action in the prosecution and prevention of trafficking. The first International conference on the subject met in Paris in May 1902, where the first international agreement regarding white slavery was drafted and eventually concluded in 1904 as the Convention for the Suppression of the "White Slave Traffic", Paris May 4, 1904.

The National Vigilance Associations undertook railway station and port work, particulary in Germany and France. In other European countries, including Great Britain, Egypt and Argentina the National Vigilance Associations worked in collaboration with "Les Amies de la Jeune Fille", the Catholic International Association for the Protection of Girls, and the Jewish Association for the Protection of Women and Girls".

Organization of International Bureau in 1922

National Committees were formed in: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Free State of Danzing, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

National Committees being re-established in: Russia, Turkey, Portugal and South Africa. The United States National Vigilance Committee merged with the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene.

Organization Representative in 1922

Annie Baker

League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children Minutes of the First Session held at Geneva, Switzerland from June 28-July 1 1922, C.445M.265.1922.IV. (“1922 Minutes”), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland, Annex 4, p 34

Figure 3: Fact Sheet for Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls

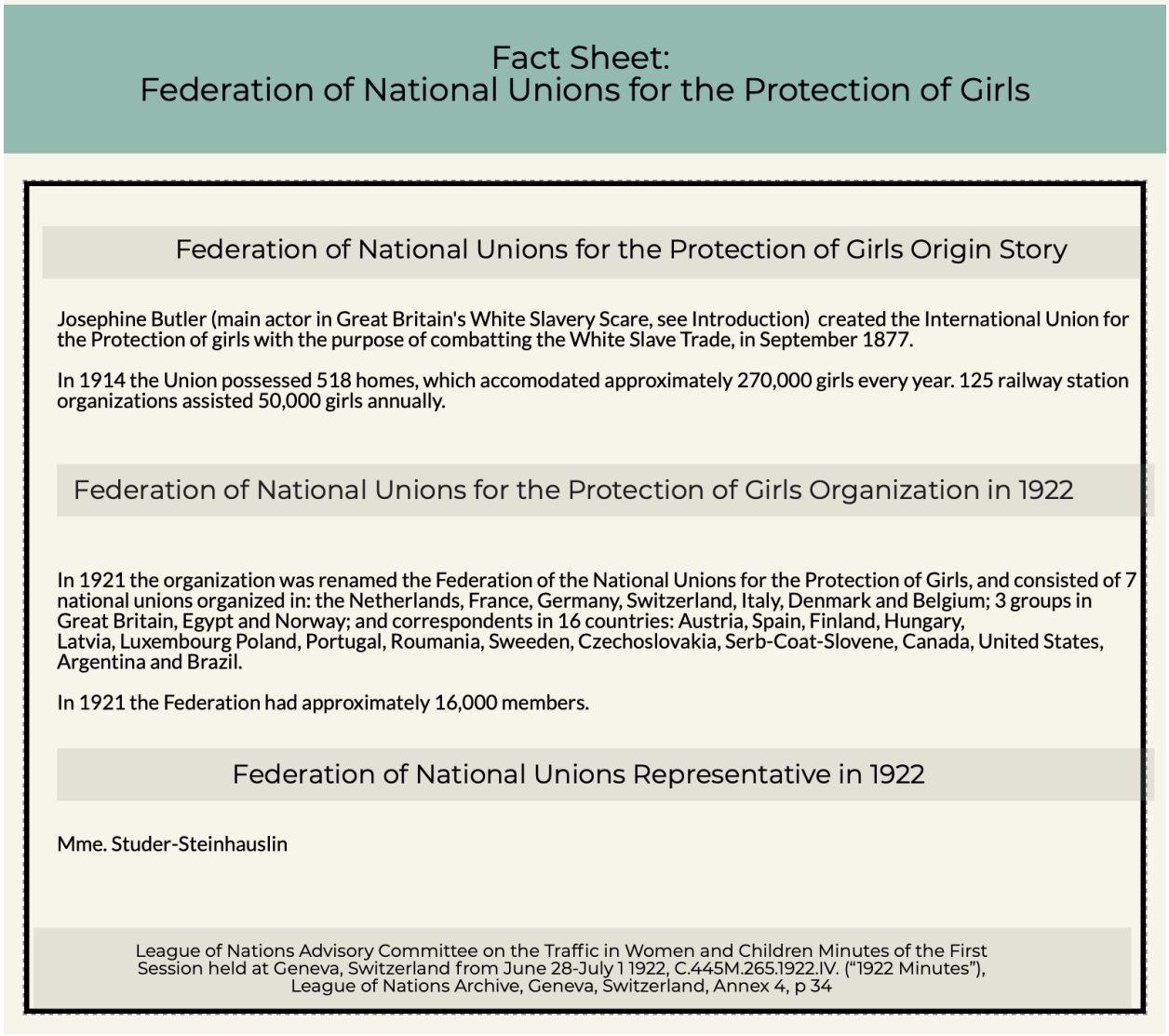
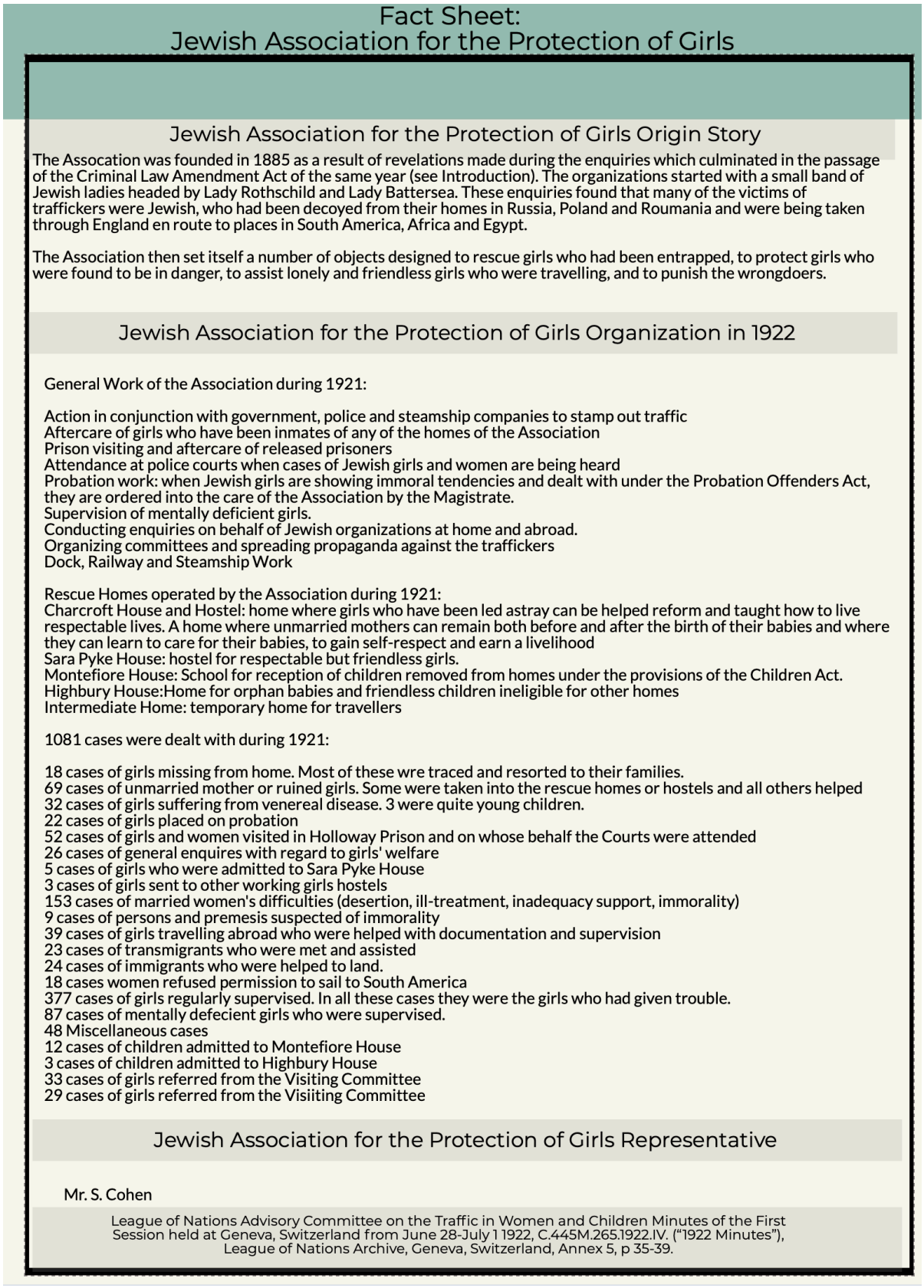

Fact Sheet:
Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls
Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls Origin Story
Josephine Butler (main actor in Great Britain's White Slavery Scare, see Introduction) created the International Union for the Protection of girls with the purpose of combatting the White Slave Trade, in September 1877.
In 1914 the Union possessed 518 homes, which accomodated approximately 270,000 girls every year. 125 railway station organizations assisted 50,000 girls annually.
Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls Organization in 1922
In 1921 the organization was renamed the Federation of the National Unions for the Protection of Girls, and consisted of 7 national unions organized in: the Netherlands, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark and Belgium; 3 groups in Great Britain, Egypt and Norway; and correspondents in 16 countries: Austria, Spain, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Luxembourg Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Sweeden, Czechoslovakia, Serb-Coat-Slovene, Canada, United States, Argentina and Brazil.
In 1921 the Federation had approximately 16,000 members.
Federation of National Unions Representative in 1922
Mme. Studer-Steinhauslin
League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children Minutes of the First Session held at Geneva, Switzerland from June 28-July 1 1922, C.445M.265.1922.IV. ("1922 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland, Annex 4, p 34

Figure 4: Fact Sheet for Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls



Fact Sheet:
Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls

Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls Origin Story

The Assocation was founded in 1885 as a result of revelations made during the enquiries which culminated in the passage of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of the same year (see Introduction). The organizations started with a small band of Jewish ladies headed by Lady Rothschild and Lady Battersea. These enquiries found that many of the victims of traffickers were Jewish, who had been decoyed from their homes in Russia, Poland and Roumania and were being taken through England en route to places in South America, Africa and Egypt.

The Association then set itself a number of objects designed to rescue girls who had been entrapped, to protect girls who were found to be in danger, to assist lonely and friendless girls who were travelling, and to punish the wrongdoers.

Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls Organization in 1922

General Work of the Association during 1921:

Action in conjunction with government, police and steamship companies to stamp out traffic
Aftercare of girls who have been inmates of any of the homes of the Association
Prison visiting and aftercare of released prisoners
Attendance at police courts when cases of Jewish girls and women are being heard
Probation work: when Jewish girls are showing immoral tendencies and dealt with under the Probation Offenders Act, they are ordered into the care of the Association by the Magistrate.
Supervision of mentally deficient girls.
Conducting enquiries on behalf of Jewish organizations at home and abroad.
Organizing committees and spreading propaganda against the traffickers
Dock, Railway and Steamship Work

Rescue Homes operated by the Association during 1921:
Charcroft House and Hostel: home where girls who have been led astray can be helped reform and taught how to live respectable lives. A home where unmarried mothers can remain both before and after the birth of their babies and where they can learn to care for their babies, to gain self-respect and earn a livelihood
Sara Pyke House: hostel for respectable but friendless girls.
Montefiore House: School for reception of children removed from homes under the provisions of the Children Act.
Highbury House:Home for orphan babies and friendless children ineligible for other homes
Intermediate Home: temporary home for travellers

1081 cases were dealt with during 1921:

18 cases of girls missing from home. Most of these wre traced and resorted to their families.
69 cases of unmarried mother or ruined girls. Some were taken into the rescue homes or hostels and all others helped
32 cases of girls suffering from venereal disease. 3 were quite young children.
22 cases of girls placed on probation
52 cases of girls and women visited in Holloway Prison and on whose behalf the Courts were attended
26 cases of general enquires with regard to girls' welfare
5 cases of girls who were admitted to Sara Pyke House
3 cases of girls sent to other working girls hostels
153 cases of married women's difficulties (desertion, ill-treatment, inadequacy support, immorality)
9 cases of persons and premesis suspected of immorality
39 cases of girls travelling abroad who were helped with documentation and supervision
23 cases of transmigrants who were met and assisted
24 cases of immigrants who were helped to land.
18 cases women refused permission to sail to South America
377 cases of girls regularly supervised. In all these cases they were the girls who had given trouble.
87 cases of mentally defecient girls who were supervised.
48 Miscellaneous cases
12 cases of children admitted to Montefiore House
3 cases of children admitted to Highbury House
33 cases of girls referred from the Visiting Committee
29 cases of girls referred from the Visiiting Committee

Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls Representative

Mr. S. Cohen

League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children Minutes of the First Session held at Geneva, Switzerland from June 28-July 1 1922, C.445M.265.1922.IV. ("1922 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland, Annex 5, p 35-39.

Figure 5: Fact Sheet for the International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls

Fact Sheet:
International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls

International Catholic Association Origin Story

The International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls was established at Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1897. The international centre is used as a link of communication between the various Catholic centres of work for the protection of girls around the world. The Association was founded when it was discovered that sever Swiss girls from Fribourg had gone unacommanied to Hungary where they were found to be living an immoral life. This inspired setting up a barrier which would close the way to immorality and the traffic of women, by creating vast systems of centres of preventative work for girls.

The work undertaken by the Association included:

Public Notices- public notices the colours of the Association (white and yellow) are posted up everywhere waring girls of the dangers of travelling.

Women agents- also dressed in the uniform of the colours of the Association are on duty at stations and landing stages to wait for and give information to women and girls and to watch persons engaged with the traffic.

Rescue homes where these girls are directed

Special Waiting Rooms in certain stations for the use of girls waiting for trains

Employment Agencies- instituted to supervise employment and have their chief object the moral welfare of girls

Special steps with hotel keepers

Newspaper advertisements are watched

Action in connection with drafing laws

A year-book printed with names and address of the principle centres of work of the Association.

"A special branch has been attached to the Asssociation for the purpose of rehabilitating girls who have fallen. For these unfortunates the Association possesses several homes in which efforts are made to restore their sense of self-respect."

International Catholic Association 1922 Organization

In 1921 the Assocation had National Committees in 17 countries: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland

Each of these National Committees is subdivided, according to the country, into regional, provincial, cantonal or local communities. Moreover, in Europe, the following countries have centres for the protection of girls (homes, refuges, employment bureaux, railway missions etc): Austria, Czechoslovakia, Norway and Roumania.

In Africa, the chief centres of work are in Egypt (Cairo, Alexandria and Port Said), Algeria and the Protectorate of Tunis.

The Association also includes:

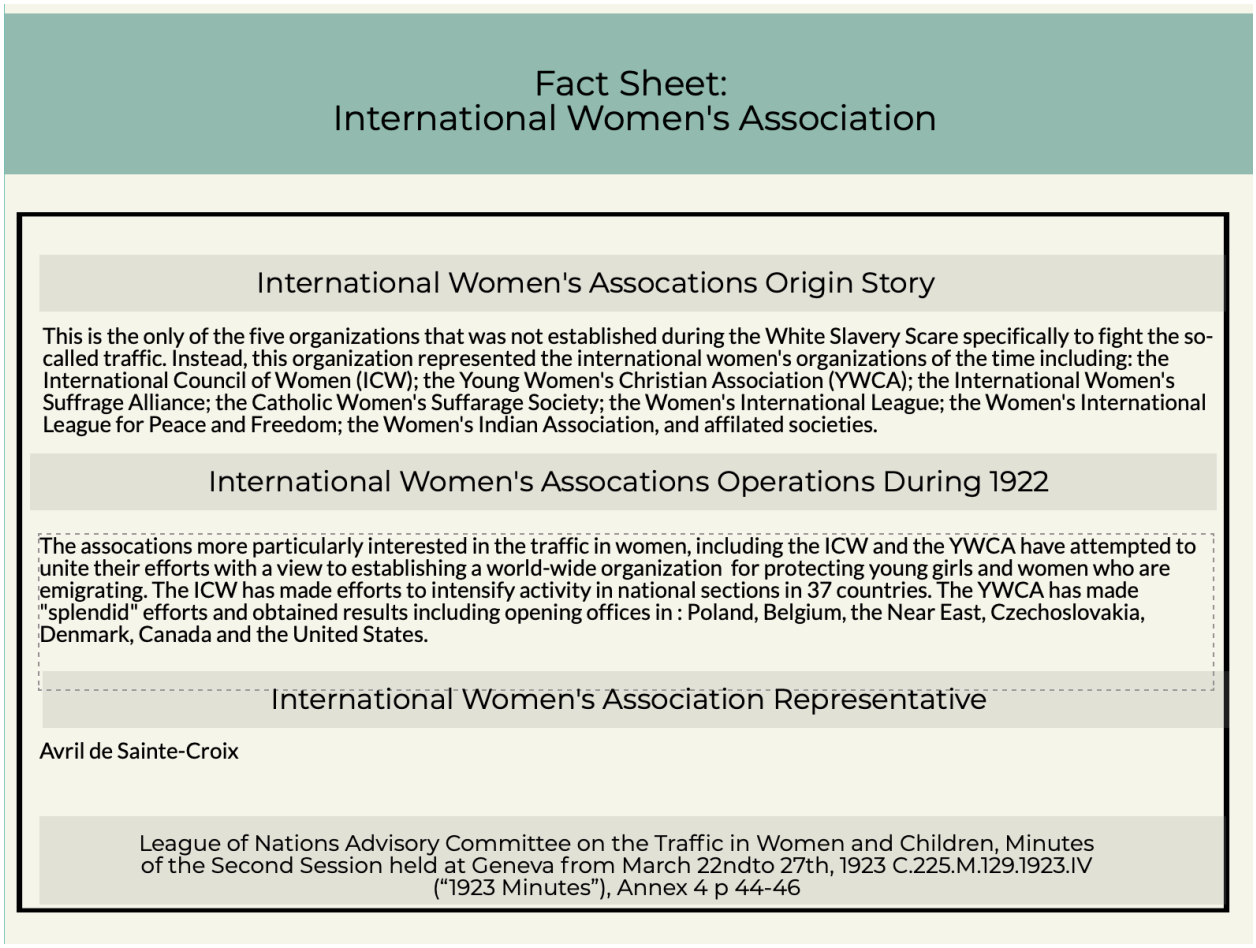
in North America, branches in 26 provinces of the United States
in Central America and in South America, refuges in 10 ports
in Australia, centres in the five provincial ports
in Asia, centres in Syria, Turkey, Japan, China and India.

International Catholic Association 1922 Representatives

Adele Thurler, Secretary-General
Manade de Montenach, President, Central Bureau of the International Catholic Assoiation for the Protection of Girls.

League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children Minutes of the First Session held at Geneva, Switzerland from June 28-July 1 1922, C.445M.265.1922.IV. ("1922 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland, Annex 7, p 41-42

Figure 6: Fact Sheet for the International Women's Association


Fact Sheet:
International Women's Association
International Women's Assocations Origin Story
This is the only of the five organizations that was not established during the White Slavery Scare specifically to fight the so-called traffic. Instead, this organization represented the international women's organizations of the time including: the International Council of Women (ICW); the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA); the International Women's Suffrage Alliance; the Catholic Women's Suffarage Society; the Women's International League; the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; the Women's Indian Association, and affilated societies.
International Women's Assocations Operations During 1922
The assocations more particularly interested in the traffic in women, including the ICW and the YWCA have attempted to unite their efforts with a view to establishing a world-wide organization for protecting young girls and women who are emigrating. The ICW has made efforts to intensify activity in national sections in 37 countries. The YWCA has made "splendid" efforts and obtained results including opening offices in : Poland, Belgium, the Near East, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Canada and the United States.
International Women's Association Representative
Avril de Sainte-Croix
League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children, Minutes of the Second Session held at Geneva from March 22ndto 27th, 1923 C.225.M.129.1923.IV ("1923 Minutes"), Annex 4 p 44-46

Accordingly, when the Committee met in Geneva, there was already a well-established transnational network of rescue work established mostly by church groups. These organizations were represented on the Committee as volunteer organizations and ended up leading the policy work of the Committee during its first ten years.

Therefore, to understand the ideological tenets of the members of the Committee, it is important to see the interwar rescue movement as an iteration of the previous panic surrounding "white slavery". The Great War, and the subsequent seismic technological, economic and demographic shifts resulting from the War, changed several important aspects of the movement. In particular there was an increased focus on "dancing girls and artistes", state involvement and organization by the League.

This chapter examines the legal and policy activities of the League with an examination of three main archival sources. These sources include the minutes of the Committee meetings, and the Annexes to these meetings which have detailed annual reports from volunteer organizations and governments regarding their annual activities. The third archival source relied on is the First Enquiry itself, published in 1927.[104]

State sanctioned brothels has been thought to be the most important issue of the Enquiry, there was a lively contested debate about them. However, I will focus on the way that the First Enquiry was an important policy document that purported to establish links between trafficking and all the social issues volunteer organizations wanted to regulate. The First Enquiry became the policy agenda of the Committee during the first ten years of its work. Instead of being significant because it attempted to legislate trafficking out of existence, I argue it is significant for three other reasons. First, it defined trafficking in a way that explicitly includes artists and mistresses. Second, it linked trafficking with vice districts, alcohol, obscenity, dancing halls and cabarets. It essentially linked international trafficking with all the social issues that the volunteer organizations wanted to govern. It also connected international trafficking with state sanctioned brothels. This has been discussed in the previous literature and described as the most important finding of the First Enquiry.[105] It is the other undisputed connections made in the Enquiry that this chapter argues were actually the most significant. They laid the policy foundations for volunteer organizations to start working on stamping out vice and immorality. Third, the First Enquiry answered the question:

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[104] 1922 Minutes; League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children, Minutes of the Second Session held at Geneva from March 22nd to 27th, 1923 C.225.M.129.1923.IV ("1923 Minutes"); First Enquiry; League of Nations Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, Traffic in Women and Children Committee, Minutes of the Fifth Session held at Geneva from Monday March 22 to Thursday, March 25th, 1926, C.233M.84.1926.IV, League of Nations Archive, Geneva Switzerland ("1926 Minutes"); League of Nations Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, Traffic in Women and Children Committee, Minutes of the Sixth Session held at Geneva from Monday April 25th to Saturday April 30th, 1927, C.338.M.113.1927.IV. ("1927 Minutes").

[105] Knepper, "Sociological Jurisprudence".

who are the traffickers? In doing so it sets out what was to become public enemy number one for the Committee: the *souteneur*.

First this chapter provides broader context within which the First Enquiry policies were being created and enforced. This context includes the Social Purity Movement before the War, and the people who served on the Committee as assessors for volunteer organizations. The Committee was populated largely by moral reformers who were active in rescue work prior to the war. Next the chapter overviews the First Enquiry, its findings and its import. This chapter then describes how the movement changed its focus in 1922 to prioritize the regulation of so-called "dancing girls", arguing this is a key difference between the prewar and interwar rescue movements. Finally, it describes the fundamental structure of the interwar reform movement, spanning the first five years of the Committee. It is organized around the major policy issues of propaganda and obscenity policing.

7 Interwar Moral Reformers

The social purity movement was concerned with molding moral citizens. There was an understanding among the moral reformers that national decline was the result of a "weakening of the moral fibre" of the population through excessive sexuality.[106] In describing the purity movement's relationship to sexuality, Valverde explains:

> Sexual desire is perceived as the most dangerous of forces, the worst threat to civilization, and hence as that which needs most taming… [R]egardless of the specific sexual activity targeted, the loss of individual self-control over sexuality was perceived to have far-reaching consequences *even if*

[106] Valverde, *Light, Soap and Water,* 28.

> *nobody ever knew about it*. Again, it was not so much about outward behaviour but a question of inner identity, of the subjectivity of citizens.[107]

Valverde explains one of the central metaphors in social purity before the Great War was a constant and active scouring of the soul.[108] Within the social purity movement, there was an unquestioned belief that the relentless self-reflection and analysis of all our sexual impulses would result in shaping of individual character, which in turn would have an immediate impact on public affairs. This assumption carried into the interwar period, where it was unequivocally held that the "sexual problem is the centre of everything" and that "all social, ethical and economic problems spring from it".[109]

According to this concept of sexual morality, each individual, "the cells of the body politic" must control and shape their innermost self.[110] Sexuality was being deployed as a tool for individuals to be reformed from within- to exhibit the characteristics deemed beneficial to society as a whole. Sexuality was perceived to have far- reaching consequences, as sexual desire was seen as the most dangerous of forces and the worst threat to civilization.[111] The most discrete event in one's sexual behaviour was capable of entailing the most varied consequences.[112] An entire network of sexual causality was being used to explain, not just physical illnesses, but also economic depressions and the Great War. Foucault explains:

> This may well seem fantastic to us, but the principle of "sex as a cause of any and everything" was the theoretical underside of a confession that had to be

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[107] Valverde, 28.
[108] Valverde, 28.
[109] See Dr. Ude's opening comments to the International Bureau conference, Report of the International Bureau, Report of the Sixth International Congress for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children, Dr. Ude Opening Address, (held at Graz (Austria), on September 18th, 19th, 20th, 1924), Geneva, League of Nations Archive.
[110] Valverde, *Light Soap and Water,* 28.
[111] Valverde, 28-29.
[112] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Random House, 1990), 65.

> made thorough, meticulous and constant and at the same time operate within a scientific type of practice. The limitless dangers that sex carried with it justified the exhaustive character of the imposition to which it was subjected.[113]

This idea of "sex as a cause of any and everything" is a central, indeed axiomatic theme in "social purity" thought. It carried through to the interwar movement.

The interwar purity movement shared many of the core characteristics of its predecessor, including the focus on sexual self-regulation as the key to national strength. The issue of prostitution continued to dominate the imagination and policy work of purity reformers after the Great War. It continued to operate as an ideal issue for a movement, which, as Valverde states was "concerned with the regulation of morality, class, sex and gender in the new urban environment".[114] Indeed the imagery, public outcry and broad criminalization of prostitution inspired and created an entire rescue industry for moral reformers during the interwar years.[115]

As discussed in the Introduction, the general conditions of vice in urban centres during the interwar period were perceived as a danger to social stability. There was an understanding that sexual morality was the centre of all economic and social problems. The destruction of the family was understood as a fundamental threat to the capitalist structure and its stability was being threatened by a rising working class along with a continuing increase of immigration and migration to urban centres.

As described in detail below, this interwar rescue movement was populated by a variety of mostly church organizations. During the interwar period, the vernacular for rescue workers shifted

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[113] Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 1, 65-66.
[114] Foucault, 65.
[115] Valverde, *Light, Soap and Water*.

from reference to the groups' religious denomination to their character as "volunteer organizations". These organizations were surprising in how organized they were and how plentiful they were. The pre-war rescue movement had been revived during the interwar period, sometimes with a zealousness that surpassed even its predecessor. Rescue workers in countries around Europe and North America began to reorganize themselves in the early 1920s. These mostly church organizations were ready and waiting to resume their railway missions and raids of vice districts.

A critical difference between the interwar and prewar rescue movements was the existence of the Committee at the newly formed League of Nations, and the population of that Committee. The Committee was formed by representatives from countries who had signed the 1921 *Convention on the Suppression of Trafficking in Women and Girls*, assessors for volunteer organizations, as well as a representative from the International Labour Organization ("ILO"). The presence of these volunteer organization representatives on the Committee was critical for the success of its work. These assessors were given an international platform to canvass social issues that concerned them. The Committee also issued policy recommendations, which operated as marching orders for the hundreds of rescue operations in towns, cities, ports and railway stations around Europe and North America.

7.1 Committee Volunteer Organizations

There were five voluntary associations represented on the Committee.[116] Four out of five of these organizations were created during the White Slave Scare.[117] The International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children, (represented by Miss. Anne Baker on the Committee) represented National Vigilance Associations in twenty-three countries around the globe in 1922.[118] The war had stopped the efforts of the Vigilance Associations, but communication had since been re-established and volunteers were eager to continue their work fighting immorality and vice.[119] The work of the vigilance associations before the war focused on patrolling railway stations and ports.

Likewise, Josephine Butler established the Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls in 1887, with the objective of combatting the white slave trade.[120] In 1921 this group had reconnected with 16,000 members in 26 different countries.[121] In describing how these local offices were rebuilding after the war, Mme. Studer-Steinhauslin wrote that "the work is now beginning again on a larger scale; the revival of travelling is being accompanied in almost all countries by a re-organization of the centres at railway stations and the opening of homes and

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[116] The International Bureau for the Suppression in the Traffic in Women and Children, represented by Anne Baker; The International Women's Organizations, represented by Avril Sainte-Croix, The International Catholic Association for the Protection of Young Women, represented by Mme. deMontenach; The Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Young Women, represented by Mme. Studer-Stenhauslin; and the Jewish Association for the Protection of Young Women, represented by Mr. Cohen, see the 1922 Minutes, 3.

[117] International Federation for the Protection of Girls (Mme Studer-Stenhauslin), Jewish Association for the Protection of Young Girls (Mr. Cohen), International Bureau for the Suppression in the Traffic of Women and Children (Ms. Baker), International Catholic Association for the Protection of Women and Children (Mme. Thurler).

[118] 1922 Minutes, see *Annex 8: International Bureau Report*, at 43. By 1922 there were National Vigilance Committees in Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States (which had merged in the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, discussed below).

[119] 1922 Minutes, Annex 8.

[120] 1922 Minutes, *Annex 4, Report of the work of the Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls*, 34.

[121] 1922 Minutes, Annex 4, 34.

employment agencies."[122] In other words, the infrastructure established before the War was being re-established, and demographic changes resulting from the War had ignited an interest in volunteering. The Jewish Association for the Protection of Young Girls was also established in Great Britain in 1885. This organization, represented by Mr. Cohen on the Committee, was originally created in response to the 1885 *Criminal Law Amendment Act*.[123] It was largely based in Britain but also had offices in Brazil and Argentina in 1922.[124]

The International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls was the fourth voluntary organization to be formed during the white slavery scare. This organization was established in Fribourg Switzerland after reports that several Swiss girls from Fribourg had gone unaccompanied to Hungary and were found to be leading "immoral lives" there.[125] Whether these were underage girls or women referred to as girls (as was done on the Committee) is unclear. It is also unclear whether "immoral life" is intended as a euphemism for prostitution, or referring to other lifestyles deemed immoral at the time including bartending, waitressing, dancing and/ or singing onstage or consuming alcohol. In any case, the International Catholic Association is described as a link between various Catholic centres of work for the protection of girls throughout the world.[126]

The International Catholic Association's objective was to "set up a barrier which would close the way to immorality and the traffic in women- by creating a vast system of centres of preventative work for girls".[127] This organization was able to mobilize Catholic missions and church communities on every continent. There were National Committees to organize the local

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[122] 1922 Minutes, Annex 4, 34.
[123] Which was passed in large part in response to Josephine Butler's campaign against white slavery and the Contagious Diseases Acts. For a history of this campaign see: Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*.
[124] The Jewish Association took the call by the Committee for voluntary associations to internationalize the ambit of their work seriously. The organization continued to forge important connections in new countries throughout the tenure of the Committee as is described in the following chapters.
[125] 1922 Minutes, Report of the Catholic Associations, 41.
[126] 1922 Minutes, Report of the Catholic Associations, 41.
[127] 1922 Minutes, Report of the Catholic Associations, 41.

actors in seventeen countries mostly in Europe.[128] Each of these National Committees is subdivided according to the country, into regional, provincial, cantonal or local communities. In Europe there were also smaller volunteer centres in Austria, Czechoslovakia, Norway, and Romania. In Africa the main centres were in Egypt (Cairo, Alexandria, and Port Said)), Algeria and the Protectorate of Tunis. There were twenty-six branches in North America, ten in Central and South America, five in Australia and centres in Syria, Turkey, Japan, China and India.

Mme. Thurler (representative for the International Catholic Association) explained some work was hindered by the war, but in other neutral countries different kinds of work had spontaneously sprung up. This included sheltering children and refugees, and accompanying both groups on trains.[129] Since the end of the War, local Catholic groups had been active in lobbying for policy changes to legal prostitution in France.[130] Other groups had formed travelling missions to rescue French women from Belgium. Many aspects of the work reopened once the War ended including, rescue homes, propaganda, education and the railway and port supervision. Other local groups awaited instructions from the League on how to proceed.[131]

The International Women's Associations was the fifth and final voluntary organization that was represented on the Committee. It was the only organization not created specifically to deal with white slavery before WWI.[132] It was an umbrella association representing a variety of women's groups. In 1923, it represented five women's groups including two suffragette

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[128] Mme. Thurer is only referred to by this name in the documents and so her first name is omitted because it wasn't provided. These countries were: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland.
[129] 1922 Minutes, Report of the Catholic Associations, 41.
[130] 1922 Minutes, Report of the Catholic Associations, 41.
[131] 1922 Minutes, Report of the Catholic Associations, 41.
[132] See 1923 Minutes, Annex 4, Report on the work of the Women's International Organizations, Geneva, League of Nations Archive, 46.

organizations, the International Council of Women, the International Women's League, a women's organization from India, and the Young Woman's Christian Association (YWCA).[133]

Of these, Avril Saint-Croix, representative of the International Women's Associations, explained that the International Council of Women (ICW) and the YWCA were the most active in the fight against trafficking.[134] They have "attempted to unite their efforts with a view to establishing a worldwide organization for protecting young girls and women who are emigrating".[135] Between these two organizations, there were at least forty-seven local volunteer offices in thirty-seven countries in 1923.[136] The work of these local organizations focused on railway and port surveillance, propaganda and rescue homes. Propaganda was a word used proudly by these organizations in describing the advertising campaigns aimed at increasing the morality of the population. The groups who had not yet resumed their anti-vice activity were ready and awaiting instructions on how to proceed.

8 First Global Enquiry

The United States joined the Committee in its second year, having not been a member at the inaugural 1922 meeting. In March of 1923, at the second meeting of the Committee, Grace Abbott attended for the first time representing the United States.[137] Abbott was an American social worker and early feminist, dedicating her career to causes of immigrant labour rights and child

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[133] Le Council International Des Femmes, The International Women's Sufferance Alliance, The Women's International League, The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, The World's Young Women's Christian Association and the Women's Indian Association. 1922 Minutes, Report of Women's International Organizations.
[134] Report on the work of the Women's International Organizations 1923 Minutes, Annex 4, Report on the work of the Women's International Organizations, Geneva, League of Nations Archive, 45. Note that numbers were not available from the 1922 annual report authored by Ms. Sainte-Croix, instead she used the annual report as an opportunity to voice her strong opinions about the need for increased surveillance on ships crossing the Atlantic.
[135] 1923 Minutes, Annex 4, Report on the work of the Women's International Organizations, Geneva, League of Nations Archive, 45
[136] Ibid.
[137] 1923 Minutes, 1.

welfare.[138] An author, lobbyist and policy-maker, Abbott was a professor at the University of Chicago until her death in 1939. Abbott is said to have pioneered the process of incorporating sociological data and statistics into the lawmaking process; she spent much of her time as a political lobbyist for social issues in Washington, D.C. In her brief time on the Committee, she was instrumental in developing the direction and organization of its work.

Abbott appeared on the international stage at a critical time: early in the life of the Committee when it was still formulating its strategies and direction. Representing the United States, the Committee was keen to hear from Ms. Abbott about what was being done in the United States to fight "the traffic", as it was sometimes put.[139] At the previous meeting in 1922, members of the Committee discussed how useful the United States' perspective would be, because it was perceived to be a leader in the fight.[140] The United States had been involved in large studies of sex trafficking, which gave them the perceived leadership in Geneva on the issue of transnational prostitution. Hence, when Ms. Abbott arrived the following year, the Committee was very eager to follow her lead.[141] In this way, the policy of the United States became the model of international action on sex trafficking. This was despite the fact that the US was not a member of the League of Nations neither had they ratified the treaties on sex trafficking.

Ms. Abbott recommended that a global enquiry be undertaken through the League of Nations.[142] This recommendation was modeled after a similar investigation in the United States during 1908-1909 where it was established that women from other countries were being brought

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[138] For a history of Grace Abbot, see Nancy Cott*, No Small Courage - A History of Women in the United States* (London: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[139] The Committee had specifically invited the United States and Germany to join the Committee because of the countries perceived expertise in trafficking laws. See 1923 Minutes 26.
[140] 1923 Minutes 26.
[141] See 1923 Minutes, 30.
[142] See 1923 Minutes, Appendix 10, Proposed Investigation into the Traffic in Women and Children. Memorandum by Miss Grace Abbot, Delegate of the United States, 61 (the "Abbott Memorandum").

into the States, and trafficked throughout several states for the purposes of prostitution.[143] This finding led to the passing of the US *White Slave Trade Act* in 1910 (known as "the *Mann Act*").[144] Ms. Abbott argued that the League of Nations was in need of a similar study. She passionately advocated for the need of an investigation that would "refute sensational exaggerations or general denials as to the traffic", claiming that this report would be the "intelligent basis for a sound programme of international cooperation for the suppression of traffic".[145] This special body was composed of eight experts, two of whom were women. The American Bureau of Social Hygiene provided a budget of $75,000.[146] This is what became known as the "First Global Enquiry".

The First Global Enquiry was an enormous project undertaken by the Committee. Published in 1927, it is described by scholars as its most important work.[147] The process by which the League established the Special Body of Experts and commissioned the First Enquiry represents the first of several critical steps undertaken by the Committee to increase the ambit of its mandate. In the second year of its existence, the Committee was empowered by the Council to undertake an in-depth privately funded study of trafficking and prostitution in twenty-eight countries.[148]

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[143] Abbott Memorandum, 61.
[144] Abbott Memorandum, 61.
[145] See 1923 Minutes, Abbott Memorandum, 11.
[146] First Enquiry, Preliminary Observations, 1:
The Advisory Committee agreed that a general study of the conditions under which the traffic is carried on would be valuable to it and suggested that experts should be appointed to carry out a study on the spot with the cooperation of the governments of the countries concerned. The approval of this proposal by the Council of the Assembly was made possible by the offer of the American Bureau of Social Hygiene to provide a sum of seventy-five thousand dollars for the purpose. The generous offer was gratefully accepted. A Body of Experts, which was composed of persons chosen on the ground of special knowledge and qualifications, was accordingly appointed by the Council in December 1923".
For a general description of the First Enquiry see Knepper, "*Sociological Jurisprudence,*" 11.
[147] See Knepper, "*Sociological Jurisprudence*".
[148] See First Enquiry, Preliminary Observations, 5:
Detailed reports have been made on twenty-eight countries, in which 112 cities and districts were visited. No fewer than 6,500 persons believed to be able to afford information were interviewed, including about 5,000 persons connected with commercialized prostitution, a large number of whom were either prostitutes or souteneurs. The names or aliases of about 600 of these were obtained with a view to following up clues".

The breadth of the First Enquiry is remarkable because of the number of countries studied but also the number of social issues examined in relation to prostitution. It is also remarkable how much power private organizations had to conduct the study done under the auspices of the League Committee. This was pivotal because it gave the Committee, and by implication the volunteer organizations, jurisdiction to study other so-called vices and how they related to trafficking. More deeply however, it was significant in transforming how the problem of trafficking was being framed. The issue of trafficking for the purposes of prostitution has always been an intensely political issue, touching on immigration, health, criminal and social welfare policy. Yet, the "problem of trafficking" was characterized as a social science problem; it became the object of a purportedly social scientific study.[149] Experts were tasked with studying it, with the objective of creating a body of knowledge that would provide effective solutions to eradicate what was considered a social evil.[150]

The First Enquiry became the policy agenda of the Committee for the remainder of its existence. Some of these recommendations became key governance strategies, as discussed below. Other recommendations, like abolishing state regulated prostitution and making alcohol consumption illegal never gained traction.

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[149] See 1923 Minutes Appendix 10, the Abbott Memorandum.

[150] See First Enquiry, Introduction: Preliminary Observations, 5 where the methods and evidence are explained in detail:
"A word of explanation of the latter statement will throw light on the special character of much of the evidence on which this report is based. We felt that, in an investigation of this character, the duty imposed on us would not be adequately fulfilled by a consideration of information obtained only from Government sources, from voluntary associations or from other persons actively concerned in combatting the international traffic in women. We determined, if possible, to get in touch with the underworld which is found in all big cities and to ascertain what was going on behind the scenes. Fortunately, from the outset, from skillful enquiries and with the exercise of considerable resource and courage, the investigators were able to establish contact with several prominent characters of the underworld of some of the big cities in South America. They penetrated to the centre of the so called "ring" and so traced the ramifications of traffic from country to country by the securing of introductions to the "right people" in each centre studied. They wrote notes of conversations as far as possible in the words used, and these have been translated into French and English. As the facts emerged from the reports of the investigators, the Director of Investigations discussed their significance with local officials and was able to obtain supplementary information. By this means and with the active help of authorities of the countries visited, a large amount of new and valuable evidence was secured."

The methodology was a new strategy in policymaking adopted by the US, focusing on the collection of information from governments and the so-called "underworld". The Special Body of Experts collected information from the twenty-eight countries studied. They also hired and trained a group of investigators whose job it was to visit 112 cities and districts that were under investigation. These investigators were tasked with getting into touch with the so-called underworld and seeing what was going on behind the scenes. Early on in the investigation, "by skillful enquiries and with the exercise of considerable resource and courage" the investigators made contact with some of the prominent characters of the underworld in the cities of South America. There was a group of undercover agents, making contact with a group of people in South American brothels, which led to connections and methods to connect with the underworld in the other cities being studied. No fewer than 6,500 people were interviewed, including 5,000 people believed to be connected with commercialized prostitution "a large number of whom were either prostitutes or *souteneurs*".[151]

The First Enquiry concluded that the main routes of traffic were sending women from Europe to South and Central America, Egypt and other countries in North Africa.[152] In some cases

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[151] First Enquiry, Introduction: Preliminary Observations, 5.

[152] First Enquiry, Chapter 6: Routes of Traffic and Methods of Conducting the Traffic, Main Routes, 30 where the Report explains:
"The main route for international traffic in women so far as we have been able to examine is from Europe to countries in Central and South America. There is also a route from Europe to Egypt and to other places in Northern Africa. Certain countries report shorter traffic routes into through or from their territory and in addition, the enquiry has revealed some evidence of traffic routes to or from the East.
In a reply to the 1924 questionnaire the Argentine Government states: "the woman of loose character who have recently entered the country are mostly Poles. Frenchwomen and Italians, servants in Marseilles. They are all young". The investigator in the Argentine gives further information as follows: "there is evidence that many of these women also leave from Spanish, German, Dutch and Belgium ports. The girls from Poland make the first stage of the journey from one of three routes, either through the Polish-Danzing corridor, through the Upper Silesia into Germany, or down through Roumania, Constantinople and thence West. The Italians go from French ports and the French from Spanish ports. The Government of Cuba, speaking of the number of foreign women from Europe states: "The women used to be shipped direct from France, but now they proceed to a Spanish port and are shipped from that port". In Spain, a Barcelona souteneur gave the following particulars of outgoing traffic: "Some go from here and some from ports on the Atlantic ports of Spain. Any of these ports are good. In all depends upon the circumstances. Souteneurs of various nationality who come from the north go from the Atlantic ports of Spain. The boys from the South go from here. Some sent their girls first out of here and they themselves leave from the north".

the report concludes that as many as 70-80% of the women known to be engaged in prostitution were foreigners.[153] Four classes of women were identified as the victims of international trafficking: prostitutes, the "complacent" girl, *artistes* and entertainers, and the "greenie".

(a) "Prostitutes. A large number of foreign women discovered in each country were undoubtedly prostitutes in their own country. In every city where prostitution flourishes there are girls who hear that more money is to be made elsewhere, or who are tired of the place where they are carry on their trade.

(b) The "semi-professional" and the "complacent" girl. We have mentioned the "prostitute" class first because this is probably the readiest source from which recruits for foreign traffic can be secured, but it is by no means the only source. There is a group of girls found in large cities who are not prostitutes in the ordinary sense, and, who are sometimes known in the underworld as the semi-professional. They have homes and occupations on which they depend for part of their subsistence but earn money periodically by soliciting in the streets or by going to houses of assignation when called by management. These girls are often attractive and considered great prizes if they consent to go to a foreign country. A common method by which a *souteneur* gains control over a girl of this type is to make her acquittance and follow it up with visits to the theatre and presents of jewelry and clothes. In due course, he having posed as a man of wealth, proposes to take the girl for a foreign trip as his mistress. The real situation is disclosed to the girl gradually and power over her is developed as opportunity offers.

(c) Artistes and Entertainers. Another group of girls which appears to run a special risk of being exploited for purposes of prostitution in a foreign country is composed of those who begin by earning their living as artistes and entertainers. There is a great deal of demand for girls in all European countries and in Central America and South America, and troupes of them constantly travel from town to town and country to country visiting music-halls, cabarets, cafes and other places of amusement. Some of the troupes are under proper management and supervision, but instances were brought to the notice of the investigators of deliberate exploitation.[154]

(d) The inexperienced girl. Another group of girls, which supplies perhaps the most tragic of cases of those coming within the international traffic, is known in the

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[153] This number is a single statistic obtained from the Brazilian government report. It is used as a sensational number throughout the report. see Chapter Two: Extent of the Traffic, Number of Foreign Women, at 10 where the First Enquire states:
The Brazilian Government, in a letter to the League of Nations dated March 12th, 1923, said in relation to foreign women, employed in houses of prostitution "the foreign element forms a very large proportion of the total, both in houses of this nature and among prostitutes in general. There are brothels, a very large number, frequented exclusively by foreign women, who have come from almost every country in Europe. If we disregard the lowest class of brothel (conventilhos), where the foreign element is also prominent but to a lesser degree and confine our answer to the terms of the questionnaire, which refers to brothels properly so called, the proportion of foreign women employed is 80 percent".

[154] First Enquiry, Chapter 4: Sources of Supply, The Kind of Women Procured, 19-21.

> underworld as the "greenies" or "inexperienced girls". These are for the most part girls whose parents are in poor circumstances with possibly large families of girls to support. And, having no prospects of occupation at home, they are eager to take any opportunity which offers for leaving their country. Marriage is often the expedient adopted by the *sounteneurs* for securing such girls. The *souteneur*, after a hasty courtship, offers marriage and takes her to his alleged home in a foreign country."

The causes of trafficking were said to include the existence of vice districts and licensed houses, unrestricted alcohol consumption, and loose obscenity and immigration laws.[155] Traffickers were found to include *madames*, principals, intermediaries and *souteneurs*.[156] These findings of the First Enquiry are described below because they form the foundation on which policy was based at the League for the life of the Committee. They also represent archetypes that survived WWII and continued to inform international policy on human trafficking.

8.1 Causes of Trafficking: Loose Morals

Vice districts, licensed houses, alcohol and obscene publications were found to be the main causes of both national and international trafficking.[157] These all, according to the First Enquiry,

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[155] First Enquiry, Chapter 6: Routes of Traffic and Methods of Conducting the Traffic, Main Routes.
[156] First Enquiry, Conclusion: The Traffickers, 44.
[157] First Enquiry Chapter 3: The Demand for Foreign Women, Causes of the Demand, 14:
"(a) Vice districts. Tolerated vice districts become a canker of corruption in the midst of a community. The following account by an investigator of what he saw may serve as an example:
"prostitutes may be seen standing in the windows and doorways of their cribs, clad in loose-fitting garments and short dresses, with arms and legs exposed, calling loudly to the passers-by. The houses are extremely unsanitary, and in most cases have little or no privacy. All day and all-night hundreds of old and young men can be seen passing through the street entering and leaving the houses, soldiers and sailors of all nationalities are always visible. In fact, souteneurs usually meet the incoming steamers, warships and so forth, and direct the unacquainted to the district […]The repulsive details in the above quotation show how vice districts lead to the worst forms of sexual excess. Perversion is no doubt symptomatic of certain abnormal minds to be found in all countries, but as it manifests itself in the tolerated districts it is calculated to spread insidious corruption through the community, especially among the young men.
(b) Licensed Houses. We are led to the conclusion that commercialized vice leading to international traffic undoubtedly receives a strong stimulus where prostitution is either ignored or where the control takes the form of official recognition by the registration of prostitutes or the licensing of brothels (at 14).
(c) Alcohol and Drugs. Among other causes which have a direct bearing on commercialized prostitution and also international traffic the evidence points specifically to the unrestricted sale of alcohol and to the trade in obscene books, photographs and other articles. As regards the sale of alcohol, we recognize that it is entirely outside the sphere to deal generally with the problem of intoxicating liquor and the policy adopted towards it in different countries, but we feel it is our duty to point out the intimate connection between alcohol and the worst aspects of commercialized prostitution. There is abundant evidence of this connection throughout the reports of the

indicated an attitude adopted towards prostitution, which increased the instance of commercial vice nationally and internationally.[158] Vice districts were found to lead to the worst forms of sexual excess, which according to the inspectors included public sex:

> The women (in vice districts) are the most depraved that can be imagined. In addition to normal intercourse, they suggest various forms of perversion and do not hesitate to take part in an exhibition of degrading acts if the compensation offered is sufficiently attractive.[159]

These red-light districts were so pernicious because apparently, they manifested a perverted sexuality that was "calculated to spread insidious corruption through the community, especially among its young men".[160] Sex in public, sex with strangers, particular sexual positions and sex for money all represented a perverted sickness being spread in vice districts from depraved women to innocent men. According to the First Enquiry, perversion had apparently become airborne in cities with vice districts and was likely to spread.

The First Enquiry claimed to have found "definitive evidence" that licensed houses create a steady demand for new women and that this demand was met by traffickers and caused both national and international traffic.[161] This evidence was gathered by three country reports that claimed licensed houses provide a steady market, and statements from the "underworld"

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investigation. In vice districts, in the saloons, cabarets, music halls and other places frequented by women for the purposes of prostitution, the inevitable preliminary is a "drink" (at 17).
(d) Obscene Publications. The trade in obscene publications is also a direct stimulus to prostitution, and, like the traffic in women, is international in its operation. The attraction of visitors especially foreign visitors, to brothels, often starts with the exhibition to them of indecent photographs."

[158] First Enquiry Chapter 3: The Demand for Foreign Women, Causes of the Demand, 14.
[159] First Enquiry, Chapter 3: The Demand for Foreign Women, Causes of the Demand, 14.
[160] First Enquiry Chapter 3: The Demand for Foreign Women, Causes of the Demand, 14.
[161] First Enquiry, Chapter 3: Causes of the Demand, 14: "We have definitive evidence that licensed houses create a steady demand for new women and that this demand is met by traffickers and causes both national and international traffic".

confirming this fact. For example, The President of Uruguay introducing a bill on the traffic stated:

> These houses of immorality need procurers to supply them with women and, indeed, the existence of procurers is justified, since the law tolerates these establishments and even systematizes them by allowing them to carry on their activities under official supervision. The keeper of a brothel or similar establishment, notwithstanding with which he is viewed by the public authorities, is just as much a procurer as the trafficker who sells him the pitiable merchandise which he has bought from foreign lands or as the local *souteneur* who hands over the women he has violated or seduced to the be exploited for their common benefit." [162]

In truth, it was scant evidence of dubious credibility, but given the cloak of respectability the League provided, it was repeatedly used at the Committee when the issue of licensed houses was discussed.

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[162] First Enquiry, Chapter 3: Causes of the Demand, 14, responses from the governments in the Netherlands, Uruguay, and Italy suggested that licensed houses provided a market for national and international traffickers. Interestingly at this stage in history, the Netherlands was strongly against the regulation of sex work. The First Enquiry outlines:
"In its reply to the questionnaire issued in 1924, the Government of the Netherlands states:
In the case of women or girls, who, owing to their own frivolity or to special circumstances, are easy victims of the traffic it is the existence of licensed houses which supplies the traffickers and their accomplices with a sure and permanent market for their services. As regards the traffic in children, it is proved that, before the abolition of licensed houses the owners of the latter often found means to procure very young girls from abroad."
And yet again there is proof of the connection between brothels and traffickers in the following extract from an official circular:
"A study of the reports relating to the examination of foreign prostitutes which have been forwarded to the Central Office for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children show that these prostitutes alternate, take one another's places, and follow closely one after another in certain centres and licensed houses with such remarkable regularity, as regards times and movements, that there is reason to suspect, if not the existence of a regular organization for bringing foreign prostitutes to Italy and placing them in licensed houses in accordance with the established plan, at all events the activity of individuals who keep in constant touch with one another and act as intermediaries between prostitutes and proprietors of brothels" (at 14-15).

8.2 Trafficking Defined

From the very definition of international traffic in the First Enquiry, we can see that a broad net was being cast over other forms of extra-marital sexual relationships and so-called vice.[163] International traffic was defined in the First Enquiry as "the procuration and transportation for gain of women and girls to a foreign country, for the sexual gratification of one or more persons".[164] This definition goes on to specifically included sexual relationships between a "mistress and wealthy man", which do not fit neatly within the context of commercial prostitution.[165] It also explicitly included entertainers and *artistes* who are exploited under degrading and demoralizing conditions, even if they never exchange sex for money. At the outset the First Enquiry, the investigators found that it was impossible to separate the question of international traffic with national forms of commercialized vice and prostitution.[166]

Women who were already engaged in prostitution before relocating were considered the largest and most obvious type of woman to be sent abroad.[167] The report found that many of these women, who were engaged in prostitution before being internationally trafficked, were still victims needing protection because they were often misled about work conditions, exploited by traffickers and found themselves at their mercy in strange lands.[168] Including "immoral" women as victims

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[163] First Enquiry, Chapter 1: The Character of the Traffic, 9: "for the purposes of this study, international traffic has been taken as meaning primarily the direct or indirect procuration and transportation for gain to another country of a woman and girls for the sexual gratification of one or more other persons. This definition covers the cases in which girls have been procured and transported to become mistresses of wealthy men. It also covers certain cases of the procuring of women as entertainers and artistes and exploiting them for purposes of prostitution in foreign countries under degrading and demoralizing conditions."
[164] First Enquiry, Chapter 1: The Character of the Traffic, 9.
[165] First Enquiry, Chapter 1: The Character of the Traffic, 9
[166] First Enquiry, Chapter 1: The Character of the Traffic, 9: "it has been found difficult if not impossible to isolate the international question entirely from various forms of commercialized vice where there is no transportation to a foreign country."
[167] First Enquiry, Chapter 4: Sources of Supply, The Kind of Women Procured, 19.
[168] First Enquiry, Chapter 4: Sources of Supply, The Kind of Women Procured, 19: "A large number of foreign women met with were prostitutes before they went abroad, but there is ample evidence for believing that a considerable proportion of them were originally induced to become prostitutes by some form of deceit or false pretense. Even if, thanks to national and international action, a greater measure of protection that was one the case

was considered a feminist victory at the time (because it allowed them access to rescue homes) and still is by some modern scholars.[169] The investigators reported that methods used to traffic prostitutes generally included lending them money to make the trip, then exploiting them upon arrival.[170]

9 *Souteneurs* in the First Enquiry

In the white slave panic before World War One, the character of the "white slaver" was generally seen as either a Chinese or a Jewish man.[171] As described in the Introduction, many moral reformers in London focused their racial profiling towards the Chinese population. The First Enquiry set out to answer the question: who were the so-called traffickers? In answering this question, they established a cast of underworld characters and identified who was to become public enemy number one: the *souteneur*.[172] While the investigators didn't find an organized network trafficking woman, they did identify looser associations they termed clubs.[173] Explaining these clubs, the investigators report detailed:

> The entrance to the underworld of traffickers, *souteneurs* and prostitutes was affected at Buenos Aries by establishing relationship with the owners of a number of licensed

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has been given to the honest girl, the prostitute has her claim to protection from open and shameless exploitation. The traffic as it exists would not appear by any means to be only a traffic in prostitutes is an evil which on all grounds of health or morals and in the interest of the future of the race, must be uprooted"

[169] See Pliley, *"Claims to Protection"*.

[170] First Enquiry, Chapter 4: Sources of Supply, The Kind of Women Procured, 19: "souteneurs make plausible proposals to take them abroad by offering to advance them money for that purpose. A girl of this class usually knows that she will be expected to practice prostitution to pay back the money advanced for the journey, and even perhaps to pay towards the support of the souteneur, who may have been acting with her locally in that capacity."

[171] Bush, *"Gender and Empire",* 3.

[172] First Enquiry, Chapter 5, 24-25: Traffickers and Their Associates, define souteneur as "the activities of the souteneurs have been described throughout this report. It is they who secure new girls, bring them to a foreign country, and place them in the houses of prostitution with the acquiescence of the madams. The souteneurs seldom have enough means to operate continuously on an independent basis".

[173] First Enquiry, Chapter 5: Traffickers and Their Associates, 29 "In many big cities *souteneurs* and their associates are found to congregate at regular resorts. It is in these centres that news is circulated as to the prospects of the trade in different countries, opportunities are canvassed, and introductions are given. A good deal of the information which has been gained for the purposes of this enquiry was secured as a result of visits paid to such resorts".

> houses. These men had organized themselves into a club. The leader of this club was a man of long and varied experience in prostitution in many countries. He held his leadership not by virtue of any formal election but because of his wide experience and fearless cunning. In devising ways and means to evade the regulations and outwit the officials he shows flashes of genius. Where necessary he seeks and makes corrupt alliances with minor officials who are useful to him and his group. The members of this club deal in women as merchandise. They draw into the business of finding suitable and trustworthy housekeepers, numbers of agents and commissionaires. The matter of capital the wealthier among them act as moneylenders. They lend money to buy property but also for long trips to secure girls.[174]

Government representatives on the Committee began to increasingly recognize the political opportunities that broad criminal penalties on "*souteneurs*" provided when conducting sweeping campaigns against immorality in urban centres. The prewar moral reform movement recognized the advantages of broadly worded laws against "immorality" when policing political dissidents. For the most part, however, these moral reformers were private citizens agitating for state attention to morality offenses before WWI.[175]

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[174] First Enquiry, Chapter 5: Traffickers and Their Associates*,* 24-25.

[175] For example, Anthony Comstock was a private citizen who founded the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice in 1872, with the support of wealthy supporters in the Young Men's Christian Association. Comstock sponsored the passage of a federal anti-obscenity law that forbade using the mail for obscene materials, which included information on abortion and contraceptive devices. This law was known as the "Comstock Act" and was used as a tool to target those advocating for sex education and free love. Beisel explains:

> While Comstock argued that obscenity lay at the root of problems of sexual disorder, free lovers offered a radically different analysis of these problems. Free lovers argued that women were sexual enslaved by the existing institution of marriage. They asserted that neither the church nor the state had the right to regulate sexual relations. Comstock used the obscenity laws to arrest and imprison free love advocates, in the process becoming the movement's chief target. The free love movement mounted the only sustained attempts to repeal the Comstock Laws and discredit the anti-vice movement… (Nicola Beisel, *Imperiled Innocents: Anthony Comstock and Family Reproduction in Victorian America*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) at 77-78).

Before the First Enquiry's publication in 1926, the issue of *souteneurs* occupied very little space in the Minutes of the Committee The Committee did not discuss *souteneurs* in much length before 1927. The rare mention of *souteneurs* was in the reports from voluntary organizations, and updates on national legislative updates. During the first meeting in 1922, the only mention of *souteneurs* was in the Report of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls.[176] This report claims that the 1912 White Slavery Treaty "caused the immediate flight in England of a large number of *souteneurs*".[177] It goes on to report that despite this departure of *souteneurs* before WWI, since the war ended, there had been an increase of men, especially young men, who were acting as *souteneurs*.[178] There was no mention of *souteneurs* at all during the 1923 Meeting, and in 1925 it was only mentioned with reference to legislative updates in Latvia and Uruguay.[179]

Interestingly, in 1926, there was more reported activity by rescue missions on the issue of *souteneurs*.[180] For example, Avril de Sainte-Croix reported that in India a woman was hired by a missionary organization for rescue work in white brothels and to keep watch over the *souteneurs*.[181] Likewise, the First Enquiry was published in 1926 and for the first time canvasses the issue of *souteneurs* in great and colourful detail.[182] It is the first time that *souteneurs* are given such flesh in international policy making. The report was creating, as much as it was explaining, who the trafficker was and how he related to women. It was reinforcing, establishing and reiterating stereotypes about working class immigrant men, while simultaneously arguing for severe penalties and increased law enforcement powers to arrest and expel these men.

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[176] 1922 Minutes, Annex 5, 101.
[177] 1922 Minutes, Annex 5, 101.
[178] 1922 Minutes, Annex 5, 104.
[179] 1925 Minutes, 11 and 22.
[180] 1927 Minutes.
[181] 1927 Minutes, 82.
[182] First Enquiry, 28 the First Enquiry explains *soutenuers*: "there is no clear demarcation between the soutenuer and the low-down rascal to be found in most large towns. The *souteneur* may do work or may run a bar, a gambling den or engage in any disreputable line of business or of smuggling".

The First Enquiry set out four broad types of traffickers: the principal, the *madame*, the *souteneur* and intermediaries.[183] In describing the principals, the Second Enquiry described as the "important individuals", those who generally own the brothels.[184] Second were the *madames*, who managed brothels.[185] Third was the *souteneur*, who lived on the earnings of "one or more of his girls".[186] Finally there were intermediaries, who sometimes provided transportation.[187] The Enquiry explained that these four characters all interacted along with "other disreputable characters of the underworld who are willing to concern themselves in any fraud or villainy which offers them a chance to make a dishonest livelihood".[188]

9.1 Principals and Madames

The principals, a term created by the authors of the First Enquiry, were understood as the men on the top of the hierarchy of international sex trafficking rings. The principals acted as moneylenders. One principal in Mexico explained his lending practice was 9% interest and a share of the profits.[189] In reports, the French Government described these men as "managers or keepers of hotels, or boarding houses abroad and they live in good style".[190] This report explained that

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[183] First Enquiry, 25.
[184] First Enquiry, 25 "the men who we have termed "principles" are comparatively few in number, but they are the most important because on them depends a good deal of the organization of the business. They are often retired *souteneurs*, who have amassed sufficient money to be in a position to finance the business. As one of them said to the investigator "I advance money to the boys (*souteneurs*) who want to open up. I get 9 per cent interest and share in the profits. This year so far (about six months) I loaned out 20,000 pesos".
[185] First Enquiry, 26 explains how Madames are involved in international traffic "the keeping of a house of prostitution offers special inducement to the madame, who manages it, to procure women whether in her own country or from abroad. It is to her interest to keep her house supplied with new attractions and the law does not effectively prevent her. In some cases the madame is independent and runs her affairs by herself; but more often she is the wife or mistress of a *souteneur* whose business it is to keep the girls soliciting in the streets and public places, or she is the wife of a principle for whom she acts as a housekeeper."
[186] First Enquiry, 28.
[187] First Enquiry, 29 where it states that "there are also intermediaries who, acting as middle-men, bring *souteneurs* and madams into touch and arrange to send the girls from one country to another".
[188] First Enquiry, 25.
[189] First Enquiry, 25.
[190] First Enquiry, 25 where it quotes the French Government "Persons engaged in this traffic give themselves out as being managers or keepers of hotels, or so-called family boarding houses abroad; and they live in good style. In reality they have no profession at all and keep in close touch with procurers in every country. They generally have

these men have no profession at all and keep in close touch with *souteneurs* in every country. They also generally had plenty of ready money. Another principal was described as looking like a "prosperous businessman" who had managed to keep out of the reach of the law but has amassed a fortune, is able to lend money to *souteneurs*.[191]

Principals are described in both countries of demand and countries of supply. One of the most successful principals in the United States (a destination country), was described as a prosperous looking businessman of now past middle age who was supposed to be an importer.[192] This man had managed to evade sentencing in several countries by fleeing and abandoning his bail money. In spite of the "many reversals of his personal fortunes", he was recognized in the underworld as one of the leaders of the trafficking ring. He was known to have a good deal of money, property and was constantly visited by *souteneurs* who sought his advice.

The principals in countries of supply appear to be less respected by the authors of the Enquiry and were known in the underworld as marriage-brokers.[193] The Enquiry explains that it was to him that unsuspecting parents came for advice about the possibility of securing husbands for their daughters because he was rumoured to have information about various rich men who want

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plenty of ready money. Those who have been identified, and who have in some cases a Police record, do not do the actual recruiting themselves, they offer liberal renumeration to intermediaries".

[191] First Enquiry, 25 where it quotes the French Government again stating, "one "principle, 2-T, met with, looks like a prosperous businessman. So far as could be learned, he has been able to keep out of reach of the law. His real business, however, is to collect and pass information regarding the traffic and to arrange for the transport of women".

[192] First Enquiry, 26 where it explains: "one of the most successful "principals", 1DH in a country of demand is an American now past middle age. He is a prosperous looking businessman who is supposed to be an importer. This man has conducted houses of prostitution in a number of cities in the past twenty-five years. Several times the Police have succeeded in bringing charges against him, but he has evaded being sentenced- once sacrificing bail and leaving for another country".

[193] First Enquiry, 26 where it explains: "a "principal" in a country of supply with many connections in neighbouring countries in Europe is known in the underworld as a marriage-broker. To him come unsuspecting parent for advice about the possibility of securing husbands for their daughters".

attractive wives. This man claims to have sent girls to Havana, Brazil and Argentina, stating: "if you want a green girl, I can get you one".[194]

The description of the four types of traffickers was inherently gendered: while women were never principals, they were sometimes intermediaries; however, they were most often categorized as *madames*.[195] The First Enquiry described how *madames*, while in some cases were independent and ran their affairs by themselves, more often was wife or mistress of a *souteneur* engaged in trafficking women.[196]

9.2 *Souteneurs*

The activities of *souteneurs* were described throughout the First Enquiry. They were the individuals who secured new girls, brought them to a foreign country and placed them in houses of prostitution.[197] Unlike principals, *souteneurs* were described as men without means who acted as personal managers for one or more prostitutes.[198] *Souteneurs* were described as continually on the move. For example, it was reported that in the past six months at least sixty *souteneurs* passed through Paris on their way to different destinations.[199]

The character of *souteneurs* was given in colourful detail. The First Enquiry claimed there was no difference between *souteneurs* and "low down rascals to be found in most large towns".[200] The *souteneur* may run a bar, a gambling den, or engage in any disreputable line of business or smuggling. *Souteneurs* were described as undesirable characters, known in Argentina as ruffians. The First Enquiry detailed the description from the Argentinian government on the character of

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[194] First Enquiry, 26.
[195] First Enquiry, 26.
[196] First Enquiry, 26.
[197] First Enquiry, 26.
[198] First Enquiry, 28.
[199] First Enquiry, 28.
[200] First Enquiry, 28.

souteneurs.[201] They were described as the regular parasites and social pests found in every great city in the world and very difficult to get rid of. Roughly between the ages of twenty-three and forty-five, the report noted that some of these men followed some easy profession in order to disguise their actual occupation while others did not work at all.

Likewise, officials in Mexico explained that *souteneurs* were undesirable characters that combined pimping with various forms of lawlessness.[202] "The fact that they are souteneurs is only one of the points we have against them, often being arrested for gambling, fighting, robbery, suspicion of murder and many other violations of the law".[203] The government report from Turkey provided a similar description of *souteneurs*:

> The *souteneurs* sit outside coffeehouse opposite the houses of prostitution with a piece of chalk in their hands, each one marking on the rungs of his chair the number of visitors his woman received. If at the end of the day any woman did not pay the right amount, she was beaten.[204]

The *souteneur* was explained throughout the First Enquiry as an opportunist who will go to any length to make money from the sexual labour of women.

10 Travelling Troupes of *Artistes* and Dancing Girls

This chapter argues that the Committee's ultimate objective was to set up a global morality police to fight against changing cultural and sexual norms. In order to effectively mobilize its

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[201] First Enquiry, 28 it states "Such men are to be found in every great city in the world and although they are regular parasites and social pests, it always has been and always will be very difficult to get rid of them. Their ages range from 23 to 45 and they follow some easy profession in order to disguise their real occupation."
[202] First Enquiry, 28 it states "again the official in Mexico told the investigator something of the undesirable characters in the country who combined the occupation of *souteneur* with other forms of lawlessness "we do not have them classified as *souteneurs*. All of them have been guilty of other wrongdoing. The fact that they are *souteneurs* is only one of the points we have against them. At some time or other they have been brought in for gambling, fighting, robber, suspicion of murder, and many other violations of the law. If they were *souteneurs* only, we could not bother them, because there is no law against giving a prostitute for giving money to any man".
[203] First Enquiry, 28.
[204] First Enquiry, 28.

volunteer corps, the Committee first had to issue policy and recommendations directing the troops, as it were. The Committee was concerned with supervising, regulating and controlling women who sought employment abroad. Rather than being concerned that all women be protected from exploitative working conditions, regardless of their profession, the Committee was focused on policing *artistes* and entertainers. The First Enquiry provided a detailed description of this group of women, the risks that they faced; and the urgent need for greater protections.[205]

10.1 "Special Risks" for *Artistes* and Entertainers

The First Enquiry concluded that women who earn their living as *artistes* and entertainers run a "special risk of being exploited for the purposes of prostitution".[206] The report detailed how there was a great demand for troupes of girls in all European countries and in Central and South America. These troupes travelled from town to town and country to country visiting music halls, cabarets, *cafés* and other places of amusement. In these places, the "girls" were employed as entertainers in what was considered "most undesirable" conditions.[207] These music-halls, cabarets and *cafés* usually made their largest profits from the sale of alcohol. Between performances the "girls" would be required to encourage the sale of alcohol and mingle with the patrons. "The low wages paid and the whole surroundings of these places are such as to make it difficult, without careful supervision, for the girls employed to avoid a life of prostitution".[208]

The First Enquiry detailed how some of these troupes were under proper supervision, but others were subject to exploitative conditions. The cinema and stage had great attraction. "Both the Police and souteneurs commented on the ease with which young girls and their parents agree

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[205] First Enquiry, 19.
[206] First Enquiry, Chapter 1: The Character of the Traffic, 9.
[207] First Enquiry, The Character of the Traffic, 9.
[208] First Enquiry, 9.

to these trips with travelling troupes".[209] One *souteneur* interviewed during the Enquiry said: "all these kids are wild about the stage, the movies, cabarets, anything that makes them think they are artistes. They are the kind that fall easy".[210]

In reality, the most important "special risk" faced by *artistes* was the temptation to engage in prostitution in order to supplement low wages in the cabarets.[211] Simply put, *artistes* were often living in poverty. As a *madame* in Cuba told an investigator: "You see, there are opera companies and variety shows that come through here in all seasons of the year. The girls go broke and come in and beg me for a place".[212] Three examples of the special risks facing traveling troupes are provided in the report:

1. An investigator reports that in Athens and in Salonica, foreign women entertainers were found who stated that they came to Greece as entertainers, but not having sufficient funds to go elsewhere to secure other engagements, they became inmates of homes of prostitution or *maisons d'artistes* where they received customers for purposes of prostitution.
2. In Salonica, an investigator found that 28 out of 30 women entertainers in cabarets and café concerts were brought from foreign countries. From interviews with these women, it was learned that almost all of them were practicing prostitution; that after staying in Greece for a stated period, they would be sent to a similar cabaret in another country by an agent who is usually the manager of the cabaret and who charges a fee for making the engagements. These women stated that they were compelled to practice

[209] First Enquiry, 21.
[210] First Enquiry, 21.
[211] First Enquiry, 20-21.
[212] First Enquiry, 20.

prostitution because the money they receive as salaries and commissions on drinks which they induce customers to buy is not sufficient to support them.

3. One troupe of 10 or 15 girls was taken by a German manageress to a cabaret in Athens to dance and sing. Seven of the girls were sent back in pitiable condition. They said they were paid very little wages and were told to encourage the men to drink. The girls lived with the manageress who brought men to the house and had immoral relations with them. She said: "this is how it is done". The woman, who was formerly a prostitute, was arrested in Germany; she was temporarily released on the ground of ill health but will be tried when she recovers.[213]

Interestingly, as the above examples set out, the *artistes* interviewed made it clear that the special risks involved in working in cabarets involved economic instability and low wages. Coercion was not reported as the reason why *artistes* were engaged in prostitution. Instead, they worked as prostitutes part time because they needed the money. The most at-risk women were not those working at *cabarets*, but those whose troupes went bankrupt and could not work in *cabarets*. Some of the women interviewed were unapologetic about their lifestyles. For example, an *artiste* in Bucharest who was interviewed explained:

> I played at 513X in Vienna and also at several first-class places in Budapest. We spend a week here and there. We go to Constantinople. From there we go to Egypt. I get my fare paid and a small salary. I pick up a few dollars from drink money and now and then I meet a nice man, and that is the way I live.[214]

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[213] First Enquiry, 21.
[214] First Enquiry, 21.

Similarly, in Mexico, a waiter at a cabaret explained that all of the entertainers there are American girls, who came voluntarily for the purposes of prostitution.[215]

Based on the examples provided in the report, it appears the most significant risk involved in travelling as an *artiste* was poverty. Most of the women who reported engaging in prostitution noted that economic necessity had initially compelled her. The most tragic example given, where girls are reported to have committed suicide and disappeared in Buenos Aires, occurred when the troupe went bankrupt.[216] In other words, it was not working in *cabarets* that had produced the most tragic result, but instead not being able to work in the *cabarets*. Some women in Mexico and Romania interviewed described their lifestyle without shame or guilt.[217] Economic necessity rather than coercion, force or fraud, appear to have motivated these *artistes* interviewed to occasionally participate in prostitution.

One of the key differences in focus between the pre and post-war moral reformers was the women and girls they sought to protect, the "target group" as Hall coins them. Prior to the war, there was a particular focus on women known as "complacent girls" and "greenies". The "complacent girl" was described as "one who values pleasure, excitement and finery over morality".[218] These targets of white slavers were described as "usually minors, sometimes drawn

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[215] First Enquiry, 21.
[216] First Enquiry, 21 where it states "While in 512-X, a rendezvous of prostitutes and *souteneurs* in Bucharest an investigator met a Hungarian "artiste" who admitted that she was only 19 years of age. She was then playing with a troupe of artistes with whom she had arrived four days before. She said "I played in Vienna and also at several first-class places in Budapest. We spend a week here and there. We go to 478X in Constinpole. From there we go to Egypt. I get my fair paid and a small salary. I pick up a few dollars for the drink money and now and then I meet a nice man and that is the way I live". An investigator in Roumania met several Hungarian entertainers who said they had been sent there by employment agencies in Budapest, had only received $1 a day salary, were physically examined like prostitutes, and that they always go out with men after closing in order to supplement their pay. If as not infrequently happens, owing to bad management or other causes, one of these tours makes financial failure the results are often disastrous for the women in the troupe. In one case a light opera troupe went bankrupt in Buenos Aires. Of four girls in the troupe one was infected with venereal disease and committed suicide, another attempted suicide owing to her strained circumstances, another disappeared and the fourth became the mistress of a local man".
[217] First Enquiry, 21.
[218] First Enquiry, 21.

from the country or small towns", who are lured into prostitution.[219] The other category of potential victims that garnered the most attention before the Great War were known as the "greenies". The First Enquiry detailed this was the "worst case of all" because innocent girls from poor towns were lured by contracts of marriage. White slavers duped naïve country folk with a marriage proposal, often times actually marrying the girl. "It is only when separated by her parents by long distances that the unhappy victim learns what is expected of her".[220]

These two categories of victims or potential victims were the focus of social purity reformers before the war. The image of the white, young, innocent country girl being deceived and then sold into brothels in foreign countries was literally the plot of the *exposé* that triggered massive protests and allowed the passage of the *Criminal Law Amendment Act* in London. Likewise, in America, Ruth Rosen explained that "by 1910 most reformers were primarily concerned over low morals of the working classes, in particular those of young working-class women. "Anti-prostitution crusaders" exaggerated concern for "city youth" that in reality reflected their fears and ignorance of the expanding working class, which, with increasing concentration in the cities, was developing more of its own social and cultural institutions". These pre-war moral reformers targeted saloons, dance halls, and vaudeville halls as dens of prostitution.[221]

In comparison, the interwar moral reformers were focused more squarely on what they call "artistes and entertainers" or "dancing girls". This group were described as those who join travelling troupes performing in "low class music halls and cabarets", which placed them in various high risk situations.[222] This class of girls were often led into a life of immorality once they arrived and had to perform in places where vice and alcohol was common.[223] While saloons, music

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[219] First Enquiry, 21.
[220] First Enquiry, 21.
[221] Rosen, *Lost Sisterhood,* 44.
[222] First Enquiry, 19-21.
[223] First Enquiry, 19-21.

halls and dance halls were targeted before the war, the interwar movement was marked by a clear and explicit focus on "dancing girls". This group became what Hall describes as the "vulnerable 'target' group involved in dramatic incidents that trigger public alarm". The resulting targeting of working class and immigrant women remained constant with its pre-war predecessor. However, this explicit targeting of women working in music halls and cabarets was better developed during the interwar period.

10.2 Employment of Women Abroad in Theatres and Music Halls

In 1922, the British government received reports that "a party of fifteen English girls was recruited in Paris to proceed to Buenos Aires to dance and sing at a number of cabarets".[224] The source of this information was not disclosed in any of the documents. Mr. Harris (the British government's representative) understood the need to increase protection for women and girls travelling abroad to perform in music and dance halls as an utterly urgent matter. Inspired by this new information, Mr. Harris explained, "we have reason to believe it is by no means exceptional".[225] The reasons for this belief are not supplied.

Mr. Harris argued that women who accept these engagements run the risk of being put "in a position in which they are induced into a life of immorality".[226] In discussing the proposal, Mr. Harris explained that while an employment contract may not directly induce a woman "to lead an immoral life", the "temptation to do so must be obvious".[227] Accordingly, Mr. Harris proposed

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[224] 1922 Minutes, *Annex 11, Memorandum by Mr. Harris on the employment of women abroad in theatres, music-halls etc.* ("Harris Memo"), 53:"last year a party of fifteen English girls was recruited in Paris to proceed to Buenos Aires to dance and sing in a number of cabarets".
[225] *Harris Memo,* 53: "in order to illustrate the sort of case I have in mind, I should like to quote a specific case which has been brought to the notice of the British Government within the last few weeks, and we have reason to believe that it is by no means exceptional".
[226] *Harris Memo,* 53: "I think the Committee will agree that no woman ought to be asked to sign a contract of this kind. While there may be no direct inducement to the girl to lead and immoral life, the temptation to do so must be obvious, especially if for some breach of the contract she is left stranded in a foreign town with no means to pay her fare back to her own country".
[227] *Harris Memo,* 53.

two government responses to this perceived urgent matter. First, governments should be invited to warn women about the risks of accepting entertainment engagements when at the passport offices. Second, governments should exercise supervision over music halls and cabarets to make sure that there was no attempt made by management to induce girls to lead immoral lives.[228] These proposals were met with wide support at the Committee's first meeting.

The discussion that followed focused on how to increase the ambit of these recommendations.[229] Mme. Hein (Denmark's representative), suggested "under 16" be replaced by "minor" and that "Governments that had adhered to the 1921 Convention" be replaced by "the Governments".[230] Mme. Hein considered broader verbiage preferable to increase the ambit of the recommendation.[231] The representative of the Jewish Association, Mr. Cohen, suggested that the words "with the help of voluntary associations" be added to the suggestion that women be warned when applying for passports.[232] Mme. Sainte-Croix (of the International Women's Association) picked up this suggestion, arguing that professional as well as voluntary associations should be included in the recommendation.[233]

M. Okuyama (the representative of Japan) considered these administrative measures to be necessary but insufficient.[234] He suggested that there needed to be information that warned girls in upper classes of schools of the dangers of emigration.[235] Mme. Studer-Steinhauslin suggested that information should be given not only to the girls, but also to their parents.[236] Representatives of

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[228] Harris Memo, 53-54.
[229] 1922 Minutes, 17-18.
[230] Mme. Hein explained that Denmark, while on the Committee, had not yet signed the 1921 Convention, 1922 Minutes, 17.
[231] 1922 Minutes, 17.
[232] 1922 Minutes, 17.
[233] 1922 Minutes, 17.
[234] 1922 Minutes, 17.
[235] 1922 Minutes, 17.
[236] 1922 Minutes, 17.

three voluntary organizations (Mme. Studer-Steinhauslin, Mme. DeMonentach and Miss Baker) met M. Okuyama's suggestion with keen support.[237] All three women indicated that their organizations were currently involved in some sort of propaganda work, and that they were interested in becoming more involved (see below).[238]

The French representative (Mr. Bourgois) resisted, suggesting that there might be a conflict of laws problem in trying to regulate transnational employment contracts.[239] He was concerned that if an employment contract was concluded outside of a particular state, it may not be within the jurisdiction of that state to regulate the relationship. Mme. Sainte-Croix immediately quashed this suggestion.[240] She reassured him that the French Civil Code did not legally recognize immoral contracts.[241] He objected from a different angle, arguing that the assistance suggested for foreign women might be considered a sensitive matter.[242] This was also strongly rebutted by Mme. Sainte-Croix. She maintained that the proposal did not extend greater protections to foreign women. Instead, it simply included foreign women in the domestic protections already otherwise available.[243] The Chairman, Mr. Harris, reassured Mr. Bourgois that the French authorities had always been very helpful in these matters. The proposal was simply to "draw attention to the importance of this question".[244] With Mr. Bourgois abstaining (subject to drafting amendments in the French version), the proposals were adopted.

There are three important observations to be made about this early activity on the issue of travelling entertainers and *artistes* on the Committee. First, the Committee members all agreed

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[237] 1922 Minutes, 17.
[238] 1922 Minutes, 18.
[239] 1922 Minutes, 18. M. Bourgois was a temporary replacement for M. Regnault, who was absent from the first meeting, see 1923 Minutes, 1.
[240] 1922 Minutes, 18.
[241] 1922 Minutes, 18.
[242] 1922 Minutes, 18.
[243] 1922 Minutes, 18.
[244] 1922 Minutes, 18.

that this was an urgent matter, but it is unclear what a "life of immorality" actually meant. The employment of women in cabarets had increased after WWI; travelling troupes of dancers, singers and musicians were increasingly common, even across the Atlantic. These groups of young women belonged to the class of rebels or a group the Committee considered at serious risk of being led into immorality. Many were transgressing social and sexual norms. They were travelling to sing and dance in music halls and theatres abroad. Many performed in provocative costumes, consumed alcohol, smoked cigarettes, and had sex outside of marriage, sometimes even crossing heterosexual or racial lines. This was the group of people that the Committee considered needed urgent consideration.

No one on the Committee questioned whether it had jurisdiction to consider the general risk of women being "induced into a life of immorality" and no one explained (or asked) what a "life of immorality" was. Mr. Harris framed his argument as needing to protect a vulnerable group.[245] He argued that employment contracts often contain terms that are unfair and this can lead women "into a life of immorality".[246] One possible sympathetic interpretation of this proposal would be that Mr. Harris was concerned with the exploitation of women in employment contracts. This, it could be argued, is the urgent matter being discussed at the First Meeting, not flappers. Perhaps on a more generous interpretation of the Committee's motivation, they simply had legitimate concerns with these employment contracts.

Was it concern about making sure that entertainers who were travelling were ensured fair terms of employment? Or was it attempting to keep women from travelling in order to work in *cabarets*? Was the "life of immorality" they were troubled by simply the life of dancing or performing in a cabaret? Or was it being coerced into prostitution through exploitative employment

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[245] Harris Memo, 52.
[246] Harris Memo, 52.

contracts? Until we gain further context, we cannot know whether Mr. Harris was using "life of immorality" as a euphemism for prostitution or just describing the lifestyle of working as a dancer in a *cabaret*. The First Enquiry, discussed below, eventually makes it clear that immorality was sometimes used as a euphemism for prostitution but it was also an umbrella under which many other groups and activities would fall, including the so-called flappers.

The second important aspect of this dancing girls discussion is that it provides an early example of how the Committee Members collaborated on issues upon which they (mostly) agreed. Everyone but the French Representative worked together to make sure this resolution not only passed, but also was broadened and strengthened. The Committee made its first strong recommendation for government collaboration with local volunteer organizations.[247] The ILO Representative included an amendment requiring all resolutions on dancing girls be sent to the ILO offices.[248] This was intended to increase collaboration between the League and ILO on this issue.

Thirdly, we can see some of Mme. Sainte-Croix's political strategies for the first time. This issue, and the debate that ensued, provided a compact example of how Mme. Sainte-Croix skillfully made broad feminist policy statements while at the same time managed the French representative's objections and rallied support for the resolutions. When the issue of employment of women in music halls was raised, Mme. Sainte-Croix immediately commented that these resolutions needed to apply to all women, regardless of their history of immorality or prostitution.[249] She explained that all too often women and girls were considered to fall outside government protections because they had a history of prostitution or immorality they were seen as

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[247] See 1922 Minutes *Resolutions Adopted by the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Woman and Children, Resolutions 6-7*, 66-67.
[248] See 1922 Minutes*, Resolutions Adopted by the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Woman and Children Resolution 8*, at 66-67.
[249] 1922 Minutes*,* 16-17.

already having fallen too far.[250] She was simply stating, generally and not specifically in relation to music halls, that all women and girls should be rescued, regardless of their history or perceived immorality. In the discussions at first, we can see Mme. Sainte-Croix remained quiet while the other members discussed how to increase the ambit of the resolutions.

Sainte-Croix leap into action when the French Representative objected.[251] Sainte-Croix powerfully asserted herself as an expert on domestic French law, in order to quell the French representative's concerns.[252] By publicly denouncing his objections, she made it very difficult for him to vote against the proposal. Instead he chose to abstain, subject to amendments to the French version of the resolutions. By professing to have more knowledge than the government representative on domestic French law, she shifted the power balance on the Committee and rallied others, including Mr. Harris, to calm French concerns. If the reader was only interested in Saint-Croix's feminist pronouncements, she would miss the delicate and dynamic politics Sainte-Croix was also engaged in to ensure action on the Committee. Sainte-Croix did make broad feminist pronouncements about the worth of all women. She also finessed the French representative into abstaining. These strategies are discussed further in the next chapter.

One of the main concerns of the Committee was how to reach the general public. The Committee was concerned that written materials appealed to the same communities; the newspaper articles and bulletins written by these organizations did not reach the general public.[253] This comment reveals twin pillars of the Committee's work: propaganda and strict control of media content. The French representative saw a great deal of promise in motion

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[250] 1922 Minutes, 16-17.
[251] 1922 Minutes, 16-17.
[252] 1922 Minutes, 16-17.
[253] 1925 Minutes, statements made by M. Posner, Polish Representative, 23.

pictures.[254] Dr. Snow's report elicited an enthusiastic discussion of how to most effectively proceed with international propaganda efforts.[255]

Propaganda was understood as absolutely necessary for the success of the Committee's work, it was after all M. Regnault (the French representative) that proposed the issue be discussed.[256] The Japanese representative likewise noted his support on the issue of propaganda work by volunteer organizations.[257] In his opinion, this question was not a national matter, but a humanitarian one. He did not explain why.

At the second meeting in 1923, the League again adopted the American approach, focusing its attention on providing further collaboration to generate a positive feedback loop of media attention on the issue of sex trafficking. Two of the conditions that Hall considers necessary for the making of a moral panic relate to the generation of public opinion through media attention. In particular, there must be a "sensitizing of official circles of the public through mass media" and "the setting in motion of the mechanisms by which conspiratorial demons and criminal folk devils are projected onto the public stage".[258] In the 1920s, propaganda was a word that had not yet acquired negative connotations; the volunteer organizations prided themselves on their propaganda work.[259] The propaganda work at the time was concerned with raising the morality of the general public. This area of collaboration demonstrates how productive this Committee was when it agreed.

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[254] He also, somewhat oddly, asked whether "some philanthropist might give a prize for a novel dealing with the traffic in women, which would be published and translated in all languages", 1925 Minutes, 23.
[255] 1925 Minutes, see statements made by M. Posner, Polish Representative, 23.
[256] 1925 Minutes, 22.
[257] 1925 Minutes, 22.
[258] Hall, *Policing the Crisis.*
[259] 1925 Minutes, Annexes 12(a), 12(b), 12(c), 12(d) where four of the volunteer organizations submitted reports to the Committee on their propaganda efforts, at 96-99.

The United States again asserted itself as a leader on the Committee, advocating for what they understood as a scientific approach to propaganda. Dr. Snow, the President of the American Society for Social Hygiene, was invited to present a report on their successful propaganda efforts in 1925.[260] All of the other measures of the Committee depended, Dr. Snow argued, on successfully raising the level of morality in society generally.[261]

Propaganda was used to develop public opinion so they might be counted on to support "adequate laws and proper application".[262] The methods used to develop this informed public opinion were principally indirect, supplying other social organizations with propaganda materials.[263] Permanent voluntary organizations of every character (professional, social, religious, industrial, educational) worked to educate the public on the "right and wrong use of sex", trafficking in women being the wrong use of sex.[264] From this description of what was being done in the United States in 1925, we can begin to see how much overlap and collaboration actually existed on the ground by the voluntary organizations represented on the Committee.

Dr. Snow detailed the work of women's organizations, which had focused on educating parents and teachers at conferences, organized around the country annually.[265] These conferences aimed to educate the public on social hygiene issues, the best environments for children, and the dangers of trafficking in women.[266] Religious organizations including the Federal Council of Churches, the Catholic Welfare Council, the YMCA and YWCA, National Boards- were all considering the issue of propaganda for commercialized vice.[267] The American Social Hygiene

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[260]1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 94-96.
[261] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 94.
[262] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.
[263]1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.
[264] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.
[265] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.
[266] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.
[267] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.

Association, represented by Dr. Snow, was primarily responsible for supplying these organizations with materials including pamphlets, special lecturers and programme suggestions.[268] He explained how all sorts of teaching and lecture aids had been tried: placards, posters, envelope fillers. Given the large size of the country, Dr. Snow reported difficulties in circulating newspaper articles and periodicals widely. It was preferable, he explained to use special leading articles, than to respond to current news stories or scandals.[269]

Motion pictures were seen as an important new propaganda tool. Dr. Snow reported that motion pictures were one of the "most powerful influences in reaching the mass of the population, and at the same time one of the most dangerous influences if not adequately safeguarded".[270] He reported that motion-picture films have been experimented with great success.[271] Dr. Snow explained how psychologists and psychiatrists from leading universities consulted with the ASHA on how to make the most powerful propaganda films. When a film was targeting a particular community, it would be sent to experts in that community to ensure that it was culturally appropriate. For example, Dr. Snow reported that films targeting the Italian population in New York were sent first to Italy so specialists could judge whether the films were suitable for the so-called "Italian mentality".[272] The same method was used for films targeting the Mexican population in the US[273]

Members of the Committee who were generally opposed to incursions into state sovereignty, were surprisingly supportive of the propaganda proposals.[274] The French and

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[268] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.
[269] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.
[270] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 94.
[271] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 94.
[272] It is unclear why they do not just ask the Italians already in New York, which Dr. Snow reports is equal to the population of Rome.
[273] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12: Propaganda: Statement by Dr. Snow, 95.
[274] 1925 Minutes, see statements made by M. Regnault and M. Sugimara, Japanese Representative, 23-24.

Japanese representatives saw the issue as "humanitarian and not a national character".[275] As a result, it was an area of wide agreement. The Polish representative, M. Posner expressed gratitude that the issue was being raised, as he had previously raised it.[276] He outlined the difficulties of educating the general public, maintaining "international cooperation alone could supply the funds necessary for propaganda on a large scale, for which the Committee should attempt to lay down the most efficacious methods".[277] The methods laid down by the Committee did indeed turn out to be extremely efficacious, creating what was effectively a positive feedback loop of information creation and circulation, discussed below.

The Committee agreed that one of the reasons for the "ignorance of the masses" was because international activities of volunteer organizations before the war were held "in greatest secrecy".[278] To remedy this, the Committee resolved that their members should address public meetings, if "the opportunity offers in order to make more generally known what the League of Nations is doing in that direction".[279] In order to underscore the "great importance" they placed on the issue of propaganda, a permanent subcommittee was established, and it was placed on each future agenda of the Committee.[280] Interestingly it was the French representative who recommended a subcommittee and propaganda's permanent place on the agenda.[281]

Important connections were made to further propaganda work in Europe (the "Old World" as its referred to on the Committee).[282] Dr. Snow offered to supply all the European associations

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[275] 1925 Minutes, see statements made by M. Regnault and M. Sugimara, Japanese Representative, 23-24
[276] 1925 Minutes, statements made by M. Posner, Polish Representative, 23.
[277] 1925 Minutes, statements made by M. Posner, Polish Representative, 23.
[278] 1925 Minutes, see statements made by Mme. Curchod-Secretan, Representative of Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Young Women, 23.
[279] 1925 Minutes, Annex 16: Report to the Council on the Work of the Fourth Session ("1925 Report to the Council"), 120.
[280] *Ibid*
[281] 1925 Minutes, statements by M. Regnault, French Representative, 22.
[282] 1925 Minutes, statements by M. Regnault, French Representative, 24.

with all the material they may require.[283] This was an offer that the President of the ASHA was actually in a unique position to be able to offer. As detailed in Dr. Snow's report, the organization had developed a system of propaganda production that was extremely economical and effective.[284] In attempting to solve the "very serious problem" of distributing material within a country as large as the United States, the ASHA had established a collaborative and cost effective process.[285] They began by running test articles in the *Journal of Social Hygiene*.[286] Successful articles were printed as pamphlets for wide distribution.[287] In order to increase the readership of these pamphlets, volunteer organizations would use their letterhead and distribute them as their own materials.[288]

The moral reformers, attempting to become the moral majority, were said by Dr. Snow to be "speaking with one voice on these issues". Often the Government Printing Office would print the pamphlets, "at a cost that is very low".[289] And so, the promise made by Dr. Snow at this meeting, was one his organization could live up to. Further, the information flow was not one way, as Dr. Snow requested European organizations send him any information that might be useful.[290] With these connections, the propaganda campaign of the ASHA began to seed in towns and cities throughout Europe.

11 Information Sharing

The Committee Secretariat, Dame Rachel Crowdy and her staff, essentially acted as a hub of information. The Secretariat was involved in collecting country reports and annual reports from

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[283] 1925 Minutes, statements by M. Regnault, French Representative, 24.
[284] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12, Report on the Work of American Social Hygiene Association.
[285] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12, Report on the Work of American Social Hygiene Association.
[286] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12, Report on the Work of American Social Hygiene Association.
[287] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12, Report on the Work of American Social Hygiene Association.
[288] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12, Report on the Work of American Social Hygiene Association.
[289] 1925 Minutes, Annex 12, Report on the Work of American Social Hygiene Association.
[290] 1925 Minutes, statements made by Dr. Snow, 23.

voluntary organizations.[291] It also collected a digest of laws, outlining the relevant domestic legislation in over twenty-eight countries.[292] The Secretariat would publish the resolutions of the Committee and make them available to its members and the public.[293] In many respects, the Committee operated as a hub of information collection and dissemination.

Early on in the First Meeting, it was agreed that there needed to be some rules for guiding the Secretariat, the voluntary associations and member states about how to deal with information that they came across.[294] This information was often collected by voluntary organizations from various sources such as verbal statements, letters, reports, or newspaper stories.[295] Even the Committee recognized the dubious credibility of these sources but decided that if there was any *prima facie* evidence that it was genuine, it needed to be shared.[296] What might count as *prima facie* genuine evidence was not discussed. It appears an informal smell test was agreed upon, with the intention of facilitating as much conversation and collaboration as possible. The Committee agreed that whenever a voluntary association came across any information about possible sex trafficking that seemed *prima facie* reliable, that needed to be shared with the interested governments and the Secretariat.[297] This system developed what we understand as confirmation

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[291] 1922 Minutes, Annex 16: Report to the Council by the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children, Annex 16 to League of Nations.
[292] 1922 Minutes, Annex 16.
[293] 1922 Minutes, Annex 16.
[294] 1922 Minutes, 15-16.
[295] 1922 Minutes, 15-16.
[296] 1922 Secretariat Report, 63.
[297] The exact wording of the 1922 Secretariat Report reads as follows:
"A good deal of information on the subject of the traffic reaches the Associations concerned in its suppression. This information may be derived from various sources, such as verbal statements, letters or reports which appear in the newspapers. Information of a similar kind is also being sent to the Secretariat of the League and this is likely to grow in amount in the future. The Committee thinks it desirable to lay down some rule for the guidance of the Associations and the Secretariat as to the method of dealing with this information. It is of the opinion that, when information reaches one of the Associations represented on the Committee which appears to call for action on the part of a foreign Government and the information appears, after such preliminary enquiries as the Association can make, to be prima facie reliable, the Association should communicate the facts to the Secretariat. Similarly, the Secretariat may find it useful to communicate statements which affect a certain country, unless they appear to be worthless or unreliable, should, as a rule, be forwarded by the Secretariat direct to the Central Authority of that country, either for its guidance for investigation and report. But as information of this kind varies considerably in

bias, the collection and dissemination based on a smell test for immorality created the appearance of a widely reported issue.

At first blush this may seem to be an unimportant, purely administrative resolution that is indistinguishable from the other resolutions of the first meeting. However, when we examine in-depth the reports of the voluntary associations that were also presented at the first meeting, it becomes clear that this method of sharing information was essentially *transforming* how local police, vigilance associations, missionaries, church groups, and women's organizations were communicating around the globe.

The League's process of information sharing allowed all of these local organizations, to organize and coordinate their efforts. It allowed the dissemination of information between otherwise isolated local groups from different religious denominations. For example, if a local branch of one of the voluntary associations found a newspaper article that claimed trafficking was occurring, they would pass it along to the League. From there, Dame Crowdy would inform any other authorities or voluntary organizations who might have an interest in the information. It was also this communication infrastructure that allowed the volunteer organizations to mobilize local actors on the issues social reformers decided were most important. As discussed in the next chapter, this three-way communication structure was a necessary foundation for the Committee's work.

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value, the Secretariat must obviously exercise discretion in the matter. In some cases, where the allegations appear to be of a serious character, it may be necessary for the Secretariat to bring the matter before the Advisory Committee or before the Council. In any case, particulars of the information received, of the action taken and of any report that may have been received from the Governments concerned, should be brought before the Advisory Committee at the next session".

11.1.1 Creation of a Positive Feedback Loop

Prior to WWI, many of the organizations that were represented on the Committee were involved in the fight against the so-called "white slave trade".[298] Judith Walkowitz details how the head of the campaign to abolish the *Contagious Diseases Act*, Josephine Butler enlisted the help of William Stead. He was a journalist who published what is considered the first piece of investigative journalism, called the Maidens of Modern Babylon.[299] In this article, Stead claims to have discovered a prostitution ring where innocent British girls were sold to brothels in Belgium. This article sparked a moral outrage and led to the eventual passage of the *Criminal Law Amendment Act* of 1885.[300] Walkowitz explains how this was the ultimate purpose of the collaboration between Butler and Stead, to create enough public outrage to pass this "particularly pernicious" piece of criminal legislation.[301]

The 1925 Committee provided a detailed description of the mechanics of how to create a hysteria similar to that stoked by Butler and Stead before WWI. In 1923, as described above, the Committee established a system of information sharing.[302] In this system, all the volunteer organizations were called upon to report any information that might be relevant to the work of the Committee.[303] This information included oral statements, observations, and newspaper articles.[304] The 1925 resolution called on those same organizations to instigate newspaper reports of trafficking. As Dr. Snow recommended, "it is preferable to use special leading articles, then to respond to current news stories or scandals".[305] The Committee had created a set of regulations

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[298] See for example, Lemoncelli, "Frist International Movement".
[299] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*.
[300] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*.
[301] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*.
[302] See discussion above on Information Sharing.
[303] So long as it is "prima facie" reliable, 1925 Minutes, 23.
[304] See discussion above on Information Sharing resolutions of the 1922 meeting.
[305] 1925 Minutes, statements made by Dr. Snow, 23.

calling on local actors to both write and reproduce articles dealing with the dangers of trafficking. A system of information creation and dissemination had been created in Geneva.

12 Obscenity Regulation

This evil could quickly be stamped out by police –Mr. Harris[306]

I have argued that rather than being concerned primarily with abolishing state sanctioned prostitution, the Committee was engaged more broadly in a culture war on sexual values. This chapter has argued that WWI caused massive demographic, technological and cultural shifts, resulting in a cultural revolution in the 1920s. Rather than being primarily concerned with shutting down licensed houses, the Committee was more focused on resisting these changing morals and sexual norms. One of the key methods employed by the Committee was to control information. As discussed above, they were deeply involved in creating and disseminating information. This was the first prong of their approach. The second, arguably more valuable, method of control was through obscenity regulation.

The First Enquiry, perhaps aware of its own innuendos, concluded that the trade in obscene publications was "a direct stimulus" to traffic in women in its international operation.[307] Pornographic pictures were used as advertising for brothels and individual prostitutes, and were also a side business of the *souteneur*. Therefore, they were a *direct stimulus* to all trafficking and their vile traffic must be stopped.[308] The Committee seized on this call to action in its Sixth Meeting in 1927.[309]

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[306] 1927 Minutes, *Eighth Meeting, April 26, 1927, Obscene Publications: Examinations of Periodical Reports from Governments*, at 49-50, Mr. Harris comments, 49.
[307] First Enquiry, , *Chapter 3: Obscene Publications*, 17.
[308] First Enquiry, , *Chapter 3: Obscene Publications*, 17.
[309] 1927 Minutes, *Eighth Meeting, April 26, 1927, Obscene Publications: Examinations of Periodical Reports from Governments*, 49-50.

The first contemporary obscenity laws, both domestically and internationally were created during the so-called "white slave scare" and were designed as a tool to protect young white women from being exploited. The US *Comstock Act* was enacted in 1873 during the same time period as the moral hysteria was emerging on both sides of the Atlantic about a white slave trade.[310] The first international agreement on obscenity was concluded in 1910.[311] It was designed to protect young women from being victimized by predators looking to sexually exploit them. An international agreement was considered necessary because obscenity was being used as advertisements to lure women to faraway lands.[312]

The prewar movement used obscenity laws vigorously in their anti-vice campaigns.[313] There was an increase in pornography during the late nineteenth century, however the laws were being used to target a wide variety of literature deemed obscene.[314] The definition of "obscene materials" often included information about birth control or abortion.[315] Interestingly, one of the key targets of the social purity reformers before the war was the free love movement.[316] Victorian moral codes were increasingly being challenged by intellectuals who advocated for a freer sexual morality including Emma Goldman, Elley Key, Havelock Ellis, H.G. Wells and Edward Carpenter.[317] Anthony Comstock, one of New York's most infamous moral reformers, used obscenity laws to arrest and imprison free love advocates, and in the process became the movements chief target and enemy.[318]

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[310] *An Act for the Suppression of Trade in, and Circulation of, Obscene Literature and Articles of Immoral Use.* March 3, 1873, ch. 258, § 2, 17 Stat. 599. There is a large body of scholarship discussing this law and its history. See for example, Beisel, *supra* at 182.
[311] *Agreement for the Suppression of Circulation of Obscene Publications*, signed at Paris on May 4, 1910.
[312] For a discussion of this international agreement, see the 1927 Minutes, 49-50, Mr. Harris comments at 49.
[313] Beisel *"Comstock and Family Reproduction",* 77.
[314] Beisel, 77.
[315] Beisel, 77.
[316] Beisel, 77.
[317] Rosen, *Lost Sisterhood,* 43.
[318] Beisel, *"Comstock and Family Reproduction"*, 77.

In the interwar period, the rescue movement continued to use obscenity laws to regulate morality.[319] Country and voluntary organization reports often included detailed descriptions of all indecent materials collected. Some campaigners, including Comstock's successor, started to focus on theatre productions that depicted gay characters, or prostitution on stage.[320] The use of obscenity laws was encouraged in Geneva, and the interwar rescue movement seized on obscenity laws as convenient tools in their wider anti-vice campaigns.

The issue of obscenity was raised in 1923, the second year of the Committee.[321] Miss Baker of the International Bureau brought the issue up, noting the Committee might be interested that an international conference was being held on the question of obscene publications in 1923.[322] She maintained there was a close connection between obscene publications and the traffic of women and so she hoped that the Committee would eventually be entrusted with this issue.[323] Mr. Bourgois, the French representative explained that there was an international conference in France on the issue of passing an international convention on obscenity. He suggested that the Committee should not deal with the matter until the conference was concluded.[324] He alluded to the possibility that members of the Committee may be asked to administer this new convention on obscenity.[325] In 1923, this convention was concluded in Geneva, the *International Convention for the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications*.[326] With this, the matter

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[319] Cromwell, *Global Anti-Vice Activism*.
[320] Megan Ross, "The Sexting Paradox: A Legal History from Mae West to the Fayetteville Romeo and Juliet" (2017-2018), IX The Southern Poverty Law Centre Journal of Race, Gender and Policy 26-50.
[321] 1923 Minutes, 28.
[322] 1923 Minutes, 28.
[323] 1923 Minutes, 28.
[324] 1923 Minutes, 28.
[325] 1923 Minutes, 28.
[326] *International Convention for the suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications*, open for signature at Geneva from September 12, 1923 to Mar 31, 1924, 1924[1924]LNTSer143, 27 LNTS 213.

was dropped until 1927, when the League Council did indeed ask the Committee to administer the obscenity convention.[327]

The issue of obscenity was unanimously understood to be an issue of policing.[328] In order to stamp out this evil, Mr. Harris suggested repeatedly that the police should focus on advertisements in newspapers.[329] He argued that in his experience "obscene publications were usually obtained in reply to advertisements. There could be no difficulty in detecting the object of such advertisements, and this was the practice which could easily be suppressed by police action".[330] This recommendation to focus on policing newspaper advertisements was approved for inclusion in the final report.[331]

What counted as obscenity was a matter of greater debate.[332] Mr. Harris notes that there was some difficulty in concluding the 1923 *Obscenity Convention*, because of dissention on the meaning of the word "indecent". In his opinion, however, there is no debate about whether pornography or advertisements for brothels fell within the definition of obscene. Rev Hoffmann de Visme wished to have included in the Minutes, an indication that the word "obscene" was too restrictive. He explained that the Swiss criminal code had recently been amended to replace "obscene" with "immoral", in order to allow its broad application.[333] The Japanese and French representatives reigned in the discussion at this point- reminding the Committee that they needed to confine their investigation to the connection between obscenity and the traffic of women and children.[334]

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[327] 1927 Minutes, 50.
[328] 1927 Minutes, 50.
[329]1927 Minutes, 50.
[330] 1927 Minutes, 50.
[331] 1927 Minutes, Annex 13: Report to Council on the Work of the Sixth Session of the Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children.
[332] 1927 Minutes, 50.
[333] 1927 Minutes, 50.
[334] 1927 Minutes, 50.

The Secretariat read the report on obscenity, created by collecting replies received by governments to a questionnaire sent to them regarding their implementation of the 1923 *Obscenity Convention*. The Committee found that not enough countries had replied to the questionnaire, and more troubling to them was the fact that not enough governments had signed or ratified the 1923 Obscenity Convention. The Committee decided to issue further recommendations encouraging adherence to the Convention and encouraging the provision of further details on domestic obscenity prosecutions.[335] With this, the issue of obscenity was placed on the next agenda, and is discussed further in the next chapter.

13 Alcohol

Alcoholism was raised on the Committee but never gained much ground.[336] It is an example of an issue where country representatives felt national interests were at stake, rather than humanitarian concerns. This was the threshold test used by Committee members to determine whether a matter was within its competence: only so-called humanitarian issues were within its ambit. It reveals another area where there was disagreement. It provides insight into the strategies being taken by the members of the Committee to increase its mandate. Social issues that were tangentially related to the international traffic of women were continually introduced as matters needing the League's attention. Sometimes these issues met with wide support, such as propaganda and travelling dancing girls.[337] Other issues were more controversial, such as licensed houses and alcohol.[338] It doesn't appear to be coordinated or premeditated, but rather a consistent and collective effort to include as many social issues as possible within the umbrella of "trafficking".

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[335] 1927 Minutes, 50.
[336] 1925 Minutes, 26, see statements made by M. Posner: Campaign against Alcoholism Draft Resolution proposed by the Polish Delegate.
[337] See discussion above and 1927 Minutes,.
[338] 1927 Minutes.

Alcoholism was an issue of great concern to many vigilance associations represented on the Committee.[339] Many of the women's associations represented by Avril Sainte-Croix were also deeply involved in the temperance movement in the United States and elsewhere.[340] The First Enquiry found there was an "intimate connection between the abuse of liquor and the worst forms of commercialized prostitution".[341] Alcohol, the First Enquiry found, encouraged some of the most depraved acts of perversion.[342] Regardless, resistance on the Committee from some state representatives prevented the issue of alcoholism from becoming a major issue of concern.[343]

Mr. Posner, the Polish representative, brought the issue of alcoholism up at the 1925 meeting. He argued that the "ravages of alcoholism had become worse since the war" and that "each of the state of the traffic in women and children is contaminated by alcohol".[344] Because of this, he proposed that the question of alcoholism be placed on the agenda for the next session, that an enquiry be undertaken, and that a rapporteur be appointed.[345] This proposal was met with sharp resistance from the representatives of Italy and Great Britain.[346] Marquis de'Calboli (Italy) argued that the issue was not within the competence of the Committee, and Mr. Harris (Great Britain) challenged the assertion that alcoholism has gotten worse since the war. He notes that in some countries, alcoholism has actually decreased since the war. The representative from Belgium, Count Carton de Wiart agreed that alcoholism had decreased since the war in some places. He

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[339] 1922 Minutes, *Annex 8: Report on the work of the International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Woman and Children*, 43.
[340] Lerner Michael, *Dry Manhattan: Prohibition in New York City*, (New York City: Harvard University Press, 2007).
[341] 1922 Minutes, *Annex 4: Report by Mme. De Sainte-Croix, Representative of the International Women's Associations*, 44.
[342] First Enquiry, Chapter 3, The Demand of Foreign Women: Alcohol and Drugs, 17.
[343] 1925 Minutes, 27.
[344] 1925 Minutes, 26.
[345] 1925 Minutes, 27.
[346] 1925 Minutes, 27.

emphasized the importance of the issue in relation to children. With this, the issue was addressed at the separate Committee for the Protection of Children.[347]

What is interesting to note, apart from the strong objections of state representatives, is the silence of the voluntary organizations on this issue. Avril Sainte-Croix represented women's temperance organizations.[348] Miss Baker represented vigilance associations across the globe advocating for prohibition.[349] These women were vocal and powerful debaters on the Committee on a range of other issues. On this issue, they were satisfied to let it fade away. Perhaps it is because there was already League support for their activities from the Protection of Children Committee and even they recognized the limits of the trafficking ambit.

14 Conclusion

At the first meeting of the Committee in 1922, we can see that its initial focus was developing an effective system for sharing information and supervising *artistes* in cabarets. In both these matters there was virtually unanimous agreement. The early debates reveal the ultimate objective of the Committee: to establish a morality police that would supervise and control those of the younger generation who were transgressing sexual and cultural norms. In 1923, the Americans took centre stage. Led by Miss. Abbott, the Americans dictated the policy development of the Committee despite not being members of the League, nor signatories of the International Conventions. Miss. Abbott proposed a Global Inquiry into the existence and causes of trafficking. The American Association of Social Hygiene offered to fund and carry out this enquiry. The results of the First Enquiry ended up directing and dictating the policy of the Committee for its tenure.

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[347] 1925 Minutes, 27.
[348] 1925 Minutes, 27.
[349] 1925 Minutes, 27.

The most significant work in 1925 was the progress made by the Committee on the issue of propaganda. Increasing the moral attitude of the general population was seen as the ultimate objective of the Committee's activities, the "ignorant masses", as the Committee members called them. Through the discussion of propaganda, we can see how the Committee was ultimately concerned with fighting against the changing sexual and cultural norms of the younger generation. In this fight, it was imperative to control the airwaves, to regulate the media and to instill fear as well as moral outrage in the general population.

The First Global Enquiry, published in 1927, was undoubtedly the most significant work undertaken by the Committee during its first five years. The global enquiry connected international trafficking with all the social issues of concern to the Committee. Earlier scholarship has detailed how the First Enquiry provided a factual connection between licensed houses and international trafficking in women and children.[350] Previous scholarship on the Committee argues this connection is the most significant finding of the First Enquiry. This chapter has sought to challenge that assertion.

The Committee became increasingly involved in investigating and encouraging obscenity prosecutions after the First Enquiry. The Council had explicitly asked the Committee to examine the application of the 1923 *Obscenity Convention*. This Convention was a particularly pernicious international agreement that purported to criminalize a wide variety of "obscene matters and things". The governments who adhered to this convention quickly started prosecuting shop owners, photographers and painters for possessing or dealing in indecent materials. Books and photographs were burned, and the authors were punished either with fines, jail time, deportation, or all three. The zealous policing of obscenity, and the Committee's investigation and actions in

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[350] See Knepper for example.

this area, indicate again how the Committee was ultimately concerned with quelling the tides of change in moral and sexual norms during this tumultuous period.

What becomes evident in examining the first five years of the Committee's work is that it was working to broaden its ambit and test its authority. The various members of the Committee were initially involved in a delicate dance establishing who was taking the lead and what would be at issue. The country representatives were not aware at first of the army of volunteer associations it had at its disposal. The issue of prostitution, and international trafficking in particular, had created a moral uproar among those who were opposed to the changing sexual and cultural norms. The First World War had stoked fears of change and feelings of insecurity. As the volunteer organization's reports make clear: they had volunteers literally around the globe awaiting instructions from the Committee on how to proceed.

The Committee carved out a broad social mandate for itself, culminating in the First Enquiry. Concerned with policing morality, the Committee linked international trafficking with vice districts, alcohol, obscenity, music halls and *cabarets*. When presented with clear evidence that economic necessity drove artistes into prostitution, this evidence was ignored. Instead the Committee focused on how to ensure travelling *artistes* were supervised at every stage of their journey and were prohibited from drinking or interacting with the audience. Protecting *artistes* was used as a thin guise to control them. Alcohol consumption generally was seen as outside the jurisdiction of the Committee but alcohol in relation to *artistes* was within its purview. This allowed volunteer organizations and local police to raid cabarets, leaving many *artistes* more destitute in the name of their own protection. The implementation of these policies by local actors is described in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Glory Years: 1927-1932

Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits

-Mark Twain

15 Introduction

The most productive and coordinated period of work for the Committee is the period between 1926 and 1932, its Glory Years. These years marked the period when the rescue movement gained the most momentum and developed a system of surveillance and control that resulted in entire vice districts being shut down at local levels. For example, even local actors in France (whose government adamantly insisted on maintaining legal prostitution on the national level) managed to shut down brothel districts in three French cities during the period.[351] The Glory Years were bookmarked by two critical events, and filled with a confluence of social, legal and political factors that combined in what became ideal conditions for a blossoming rescue movement in Europe and North America.

During the interwar period, this transnational network of women agents gained more credibility and legal authority, largely as a result of the work of the Committee members. Every year the Committee was issuing resolutions, speaking directly to rescue missions, encouraging them to continue their work, or steering their priorities for the upcoming year.[352] This rather large

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[351] League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children Minutes of the Seventh Session held at Geneva, Switzerland from March 12-March 17 1928, C.184M.59.1928.IV. ("1928 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva at 4, Third Meeting held Tuesday, March 13th, 1928, Examination of the reports from Voluntary Associations, Report of Principal International Women's Associations for the Year 1927, at 15 where she notes the successes in Strasburg, Colmar, Mulhouse, and it was hoped, would shortly be obtained at Nantes.

[352] See for example the resolutions issued at the end of each year's session: 1927 Minutes, Annex 13: Report to the Council on the Work of the Sixth Session of the Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children (1928), Annex 12: Report to Council on the Work of the Seventh Session of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee, 139..

body of "soft law" provided a novel legal basis upon which the station missions could stand. The Committee undoubtedly should be remembered as an extremely effective governance body that managed to organize and mobilize enforcement mechanisms through local branches of volunteer station workers and women's organizations. It must also be remembered as one of the first times women took a place on the international law-making stage. Further, these women were taking economic and political opportunities that were at the expense, not the benefit of poorer working-class women. These opportunities created through the revival of the Magdalene system during the Glory Years were not benefiting "fallen" women; they were hunting them.

The Glory Years began with the publication of the First Enquiry, which was published in 1927.[353] This report, discussed in the Early Days Chapter, resulted in a ground swell of public interest in sex trafficking leading the Committee members "to think that public opinion has been fully aroused"[354] and resulted in an increase of women volunteering to work in the rescue industry.[355] The interest aroused by the First Enquiry also resulted in increased funding from national governments to support the rescue work.[356] The Glory Years ended with a change in rules on the Committee, discussed in the next chapter.

During the Glory Years, we witness a perfect storm of economic, political and social factors in Europe that combine to create a remarkably successful rescue movement. First and foremost, geographically the Committee was still focused on Europe and rescue was still primarily

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[353] First Enquiry.
[354] 1928 Minutes, Annex 5: S. Cohen, Report of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for the Year 1927, Submitted to the Committee on March 12th, 1928, C.T.F.E. 365, League of Nations Archive, Geneva, 103.
[355] 1928 Minutes, Annex 5, 103.
[356] See for example, Poland: 1929 Minutes, , Fifth Meeting, held on Monday, April 22, 1929, Examination of Reports from Voluntary Organizations (continuation) D. Report of the Association catholique international des oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille for 1928 at 27. Baroness de Montenach notes that "The committees belonging to it (the catholic association for the protection of young women) had for years carried out railway mission work, and, accordingly, when the Polish Government had taken up the question of their development in Poland, it had recognized the value of the work done and had consented to second the efforts of the Committees. The National Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women gave them a considerable monthly grant".

a "home mission".[357] Each year there was an attempt to increase the numbers of rescue workers in countries where the movement was already present as well as establish new operations throughout the country.[358] There was also an element of evangelical expansion within Europe focused on Eastern Europe during this period.[359] After 1932, the attention of the missionary organizations were increasingly to the colonies and other so-called "distant lands".[360] At this stage the rescue movement lost momentum in Europe, partly because its rescue workers were being sent to colonies to develop rescue missions there.[361]

These factors were amplified by the broad economic and political uncertainty of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Fascist governments had begun taking control of European national governments, sometimes in military coups and sometimes democratically.[362] These fascist populist movements were often very concerned with increasing the "morality" of the population.[363] The fascist conception of morality in Europe was inherently racist, sexist and problematic.[364] The broadly worded sex trafficking laws, coupled with its enthusiastic army of volunteer enforcers,

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[357] "Home missions" refer to rescue and surveillance operations that were established with the help and training of the voluntary organizations and consist of women who hail from the city of where the rescue work is being established. This is opposed to those missions where women are sent to colonial holdings to set up and run rescue operations in these "distant lands" as they were referred to. An example of the mushrooming home missions throughout Eastern Europe during the Glory Years is described below. Members of the volunteer organizations would undertake tours around Europe where they would hold public events known as lantern meetings, and lobby local government officials. This method was extremely effective at establishing home missions in many cities around Europe during the Glory Years. See League of Nations Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, Traffic in Women and Children Committee, 1927 Minutes, Sixth Meeting, April 27th, 1927 Examination of Reports from Voluntary Associations, B. Report of the Federation des Unions nationales des Amis de la jeune fille for 1926, 42.

[358] 1927 Minutes, Sixth Meeting, 42.

[359] 1927 Minutes, Sixth Meeting, 42.

[360] This is largely a result of the publication of the second enquiry into the so-called "Far East". The Second Enquiry *supra* at note 97 for a discussion of this Imperial Project, see Chapter 5.

[361] For a discussion of this conference and the increasing role of women's organizations based in Europe throughout the colonies, see Chapter 5.

[362] Luebbert Gregory M., *Liberalism, Fascism, or Social Democracy: Social Classes and the Political Origins of Regimes in Interwar Europe*, (Oxford and New York City: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[363] Mosse George L., *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe*, (New York: Howard Fertig, 1985), Herzog Dagmar ed, *Sexuality and German Fascism* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005).

[364] Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*.

became extremely instrumental for national governments seeking to enforce racist and restrictive immigration policies at the border.

This Chapter argues that the Committee was living through its "Glory Years" during the period, from 1927-1932, but this does not imply that what the Committee was doing was in some way glorious or valuable. On the contrary, the Glory Years for the Committee was the period that the most effective rescue work was being undertaken in Europe and North America. What is so fascinating about the rise of women at the League of Nations during the Glory Years is precisely what historians have so far missed. The rise of women at the League was largely at the expense of those women they set out to save, sex workers and other "fallen" women. The language of prevention, rescue and protection was used to explain extreme discipline methods in institutions largely operating outside the rule of law. A woman could be apprehended at the border or in a music hall or on the street, arrested for being at risk of falling into immorality, sent to a Magdalene Asylum, and left there for the rest of her life. This is what is meant by "outside of the rule of law" or "in the shadow of the law". Because religious women running these female penitentiaries were seen as experts in moral rehabilitation, they were left free from state interference. Once a woman entered a Magdalene Asylum, the rules of that order and the discretion of the nuns were the only factors relevant in determining her sentence and treatment.

Members of the Committee who had been living in Geneva together for the past ten years had developed a strong social network. This is what I referred to as the "Geneva Group": an unofficial social group connected by a set of shared ideological goals.[365] The social networks that developed in Geneva over the years had changed many of the country representatives' minds on

[365] The Geneva Group included: Avril Sainte-Croix (International Women's Organizations), M. Bourgois (France), Dr. Estrid Hein (Denmark), Mr. Harris (British Empire) Dr. Paulina Luisi (Uruguay), Mr. Posner (Poland), Baroness de Monenach (Association catholique), Mme. Curchod-Secretan (Federation international des Amies de la jeune fille), and Dame Rachel Crowdy (Chief of the Social Questions Section) and M. Varlez (International Labour Office)

key issues. While their countries still supported legal prostitution, these "reformed" internationalists personally confided in their Geneva colleagues that *they* did not believe in the system of legal brothels.[366]

This chapter argues that women on the Committee had created effective governance structures during the Glory Years that led to tangible results in vice districts around Europe. This was done with five key (albeit overlapping) strategies. First, the policy shifted from national criminal laws towards increasing the morality of the population with surveillance and discipline. Second, morality clauses in employment contracts authorized morality police to search cabarets and drinking establishments without warrants. Third, the Committee was producing a wealth of novel international soft law. Fourth, local rescue operations and Magdalene Asylums operated as enforcement mechanism for international sex trafficking policy. And fifth, there was an increase in collaboration with law enforcement, along with the training of women police officers.

The Committee shifted its policy from lobbying national governments to change their criminal laws, towards increasing morality in the population generally. This shift in focus from state to population resulted in greater attention, funds and legal powers granted to the rescue workers. The social network in Geneva included the representative from the ILO, who had served as the Liaison since the Committee's first meeting. As a result of his advocacy at the ILO on behalf of the Committee, morality clauses were included in standard employment contracts for music halls, *cabarets* and other drinking establishments. The chapter outlines how collaboration with the ILO led to the establishment of a morality clause within the standard contract for *artistes* and dancing girls. With this morality clause, morality police were legally entitled to search music halls and cabarets to ensure they met the women's high moral standards. This shift away from criminal

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[366] See for example the 1928 Minutes, Fifth Meeting, System of Licensed Houses: Consideration of the Resolution adopted by the Assembly of the League at its Eighth Ordinary Session, 26 and described below.

law warrants towards morality clauses in employment contracts was the second critical governance strategy employed during the Glory Years.

This chapter outlines the different types of soft international law that were being created and distributed by the League directly to rescue operations. These resolutions, reports, recommendations and draft treaties, along with the mushrooming national laws against immorality created a firm legal platform for rescue volunteer workers to operate. The chapter outlines how the Committee contributed to (and benefited from) local volunteer organizations of women ready to patrol ports and railway stations for wayward souls. These groups were known as "railway missions" and the Committee was instrumental in making sure these missions flourished in Europe during the Glory Years. Annual conferences, resolutions, lantern meetings, and collaboration with local governments were all governance strategies employed to try and encourage railway missions in Europe during the period.

As the Committee encouraged the growth of railway missions, they also benefited from their work immensely. The Committee essentially had a volunteer army of women willing to work for nominal pay or for free in order to enforce the social policies being issued in Geneva. Collaboration with local rescue missions also provided another vital piece of infrastructure for the discipline of fallen women: rescue homes were being used during the period as disciplinary institutions run by nuns and operating without state interference. This strategy involved collaboration with local law enforcement and the hiring of women police.

While enforcement and punishment were being farmed out to local church groups, the interwar rescue movement simultaneously saw an increase in collaboration with law enforcement and the state. For example, the Committee members met with many local police chiefs who agreed to collaborate and work with the women railway missions. In many countries (including Canada the Netherlands, Great Britain, Germany and Hungary) women police officers were being trained.

The existence of so many women police officers within Europe during the Glory Years was in large part a result of lobbying of the women's groups led by Sainte-Croix.

16 The Geneva Group

The governance structures that became so effective for the Committee during the Glory Years resulted in part from subtle and coordinated work by members of the Committee. The members of the Committee were trying to negotiate the political obstacles in their way, member states that maintained licensed houses. The Glory Years were made possible by the political manoeuvrings of members on the Committee who were determined to see their social movement succeed. These strategies reveal how many women on the Committee had "acceded to mature engagements with power, piggybacking off existing structures and mobilizing new governance structures at the local levels- all for the advancement of their social cause".[367] The relations of power that developed on the Committee were not top down hierarchical relationships. Instead we can see the local actors influencing the debates in Geneva, along with the Committee making strides to delegate authority to local rescue missions.

During the meeting in 1928, a new multi-level governance structure was developing through a fundamental change in policy at the international level. Ideologically, as described below, the Committee officially abandoned the strict abolitionist policy set out in the First Enquiry. Instead, they recognized that the system of prostitution could not be suddenly abolished but must tend to gradually disappear.[368] This change in policy could not have occurred without complex and dynamic social relations that developed on the Committee in Geneva during its tenure.

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[367] Halley, Janet, Prabha Kotiswaran, Hila Shamir, and Chantal Thomas. "From the International to the Local in Feminist Legal Responses to Rape, Prostitution/ Sex Work, and Sex Trafficking: Four Studies in Contemporary Governance Feminism." *Harvard Journal of Gender Law and Policy* 29 (2006), 336.
[368] Halley, Kotiswaran, Shamir, Thomas, *"International to Local"*, 336.

The members of the Committee had been working together for seven years now and many of them had been on the Committee since the beginning. A community developed within this international environment in Geneva whereby some Committee members became a group united around ideological goals, captured in what they understood as "abolitionism". I call this the development of the "Geneva Group", a community of Committee members who personally identify with common ideological aims, regardless of their government policies. This group was not in any way explicit or official, instead it was a group of colleagues that developed close relationships over their years living together in Geneva. There were, to put it colloquially, the popular group of internationalists in Geneva.

To gain entry into this group, a Committee member had to jump through several hoops. First, they had to remain on the Committee for a number of years and develop connections with the other members through common social networks in Geneva. Next, they had to personally identify with the ideological tenets of the group, what they called "abolitionism". Finally, they had to negotiate the debates on the Committee in a way that did not impede the implementation of the group's policy agenda.

This informal group of the most long-standing and powerful members of the Committee all swore personal allegiance to the "abolitionists", but what exactly was the abolitionist cause? As discussed in the Early Days Chapter, the social purity movement was enormously popular and was populated by thousands of missionaries and social reformers around the globe. To be an abolitionist during the interwar period was to believe that sex work was a social evil that needed to be eradicated. However, unlike the abolitionists before WWI, during the interwar period, focus shifted toward changing public opinion of vice and sex work. In contrast, before WWI the focus of Josephine Butler and her movement was to directly challenge states to change their criminal

laws.[369] Abolitionists after WWI believed in the eventual and inevitable success of their organized attempts to eradicate prostitution through grass roots activism.[370] This activism included propaganda, rescue operations and railway missions.[371]

Many governments, even those represented on the Committee, were not willing to criminalize sex work and shut down licensed houses.[372] Understanding the new complicated dimensions of international activism, the focus shifted to "public morality".[373] The new ultimate goal of the abolitionist cause was to increase the public's morality because it was believed that immorality was the ultimate cause of sex work.[374] This shift was absolutely critical in the development of the Committee's work, and their success during the interwar period. The attention of the Committee was no longer exclusively on trying to lobby for government action but was instead focused on activity at the local levels to change public opinion on vice and sex work.[375]

Perhaps the best way to explain what I mean by the Geneva Group is through the story of one of its most important members: Monsieur Bourgois from France.[376] During the Seventh Session (1928), Bourgois acted as Chairman, directing the debates and agenda of the session.[377] At this meeting, Bourgois was put into a difficult position: during the previous year, the General Assembly had issued a resolution asking all governments to denounce the system of licenced

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[369] See Walkowitz, *Prostitution in Victorian Society*.
[370] 1928 Minutes, Fifth Meeting, March 14th, 1928, System of Licensed Houses: Consideration of the Resolution adopted by the Assembly of the League at its Eighth Ordinary Session, 26.
[371] 1928 Minutes, 26.
[372] 1928 Minutes, 26, see Harris' statement reproduced in full below: "the number of countries represented on the Committee in which licenced houses existed was greater than the number of countries in which the system had been abolished."
[373] 1928 Minutes, 26.
[374] 1928 Minutes, 26.
[375] 1928 Minutes, 26.
[376] Bourgois had been on the Committee since its first meeting in 1922.
[377] 1928 Minutes, Annex 12, Traffic in Women and Children Committee: Report to the Council on the Work of the Seventh Session, C.154.1928.IV[C.T.F.E.397], 9. Examination of the Resolution Adopted by the Assembly of the League of Nations at its Eighth Ordinary Session with regard to the System of Licensed Houses, (Report to Council), 142.

houses.[378] This resolution from the Assembly had resulted in Bourgois issuing a long statement on behalf of the French government.[379] In this statement, he questioned whether the system of abolition resulted in better living conditions, and asked for further studies from countries that had systems of abolition.[380]

This statement by Bourgois was met with a response from Mr. Harris, the British delegate that is absolutely critical in understanding the community that was developing on the Committee.[381] The response is reproduced below in full because it is a unique glimpse into the social networks that had development among individuals on the Committee. Equally vital, this statement indicates the change in the ultimate goal of the Committee. They had come to recognize that the sudden abolition of licensed houses was impractical, but that local policing would provide the most promising, albeit gradual, results.

> Mr. Harris said that at the morning meeting he had sympathized with M. Bourgois, who had seemed to be *defending what he personally felt to be a lost cause*. M. Bourgois had stated that the number of countries represented on the Committee in which licenced houses existed was greater than the number of countries in which the system had been abolished. So far as countries were concerned, however, the Committee was equally divided, but *the delegates themselves were wiser than their Governments and had already shown some inclination to leave a sinking ship.* The five assessors were all against the system, and the voluntary organizations were united on the subject.

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[378] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting, March 14-15, 1928, System of Licensed Houses: Consideration of the Resolution adopted by the Assembly of the League at its Eight Ordinary Session, 26.
[379] 1928 Minutes, 26.
[380] 1928 Minutes, 29.
[381] 1929 Minutes, 29.

> The resolution adopted by the Assembly during its Eighth Session had been well meant, but somewhat embarrassing. It asked the members of the Committee who belonged to countries in which the system of licenced houses is still maintained to agree to a resolution, which they could not, for one minute, accept. Things however, were changing rapidly, and there was indication that several governments were beginning to take a different view […]
>
> *The abolition of the licensed houses was a change which might have to be brought about gradually. The system could not perhaps be suddenly abandoned but must gradually tend to disappear*.[382]

This statement is critical to understanding the Committee and its culture because it makes explicit what is rarely stated so bluntly in the record. Two points deserve further consideration. The first is the idea that government delegates have different opinions from their governments on the issue of licensed houses. Bourgois' tenure in Geneva had converted him to the abolitionist cause. However, and equally critically, Bourgois also changed the goals of the Committee towards increasing public morality rather than lobbying government legislators. This would be done, primarily, through the work of volunteers who would operate as quasi-official morality police in music halls, vice districts, railways and ports. Their objective was to change public opinion and save wayward souls, or those at risk of falling into immorality.[383] While M. Bourgois changed his personal opinion to be in line with his Geneva compatriots, he also encouraged the development of a strategy of local policing.

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[382] 1929 Minutes, 28, emphasis added.
[383] 1922 Minutes.

Rather than focus lobbying attention on recalcitrant governments, the Committee directed its energies to local networks of volunteers.[384] The policy became essentially one of entering into the figurative belly of the beast, attempting to raise the level of public morality from within. As discussed below, this was done primarily through the cooperation of local police and volunteers and was remarkably successful. As a result of collaboration with local police and women's church groups in France, vice districts had begun to shut down, regardless of official state policy.[385]

In 1928 the General Assembly at the League of Nations asked all its member governments to state their opposition to state sanctioned brothels. France vehemently refused to do so.[386] At the same time the French government was issuing bold statements in defense of the system of licensed houses, Bourgois had proclaimed himself an "abolitionist" in Geneva. And, somewhat amazingly, local organizers, led by the formidable Mme. Sainte-Croix, had begun to successfully actually shut down vice districts in Strasburg, Colmar, Mulhouse, and with almost total success at Nantes..[387]

At the Seventh Session in 1928, the Committee was at odds on how to respond to the General Assembly's recommendation on the abolition of licensed houses.[388] In order to come to an agreement on the wording of the recommendations it would draft in response, a subcommittee was formed.[389] This Committee included both M. Bourgois and M. Harris.[390]

In this case, the Committee was being asked to issue a statement on its policy towards licenced houses.[391] This was a contentious issue, and the subcommittee effectively managed to

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[384] 1928 Minutes,.
[385] 1928 Minutes, Annex 7: Report by Madame Avril de Sainte-Croix, Delegate of the International Women's Associations for the year 1927.
[386] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting.
[387] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting.
[388] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting.
[389] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting.
[390] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting. Interestingly, this is a strategy that is often used on the Committee to bring consensus to contentious issues. If there is debate about an issue on the Committee, one of its members will suggest a sub-committee is convened to resolve the debate and report back to the Committee, either with a draft resolution or a study on the matter.
[391] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting, 40.

change the official policy of the Committee to be acceptable to all member states.[392] The abolitionist cause had begun to change in the interwar period: less attention was given to lobbying to change criminal laws and greater attention was given to the rescue movement. This was a policy change that Bourgois could stand behind. The effect of this 1928 subcommittee was to change the official policy of the Committee on the issue of licenced houses.[393]

The subcommittee recommended the following statement be issued to all member states of the League of Nations:

> Having regard to the seriousness of the evil arising from the traffic, the Committee earnestly hopes that Governments of all those countries which still retain the licensed house system will investigate the question as soon as possible in light of the report made by the Body of Experts and the other information collected by the League of Nations.
>
> At the same time, the Committee recognizes that, in countries where the system has existed for many years, the need for abandoning it must be supported by public opinion. The Committee therefore suggests that the international organizations concerned with the fight against traffic in women should take steps to act upon the public opinion of that subject.[394]

With this recommendation adopted unanimously by the Committee, we begin to see an official policy shift in its ideological goals.[395] Through the development of this focus on public opinion rather than state policy, the Committee was able to leverage its position to surprisingly effective results, including shutting down actual vice districts in French cities of Strasburg, Colmar, and

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[392] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting, 40.
[393] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting, 40.
[394] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting, 40.
[395] 1928 Minutes, Fifth and Sixth Meeting, 40.

Mulhouse.[396] Accordingly, the issues of regulating music halls and local policing took centre stage.[397] During this discussion at the Committee Meeting, we begin to clearly see the influence of the Geneva Group in the advancement of issues on the international stage by its dynamic and powerful actors. First the ILO issued a report on the issue of *artistes* in music halls. Second, we see the political activities of Dame Rachel Crowdy and Avril Sainte-Croix begin to yield significant results at local levels. Each of these 1928 developments will be discussed in turn.

16.1 Collaboration with ILO: 1928 ILO *Artiste* Report

One of the key ways that the Geneva Group contributed to the rescue movement was through one of its members Mr. Varlez, liaison for the ILO. Varlez attended all the Committee meetings and as a result of discussions at these meetings he completed a study on the issue of "dancing girls and artistes" at the ILO. The ILO, under the direction of Varlez subsequently became involved in drafting standard employment contracts for music halls and *cabarets* around Europe. Because of the personal relationships developed in Geneva, the members of the Committee, in particular Sainte-Croix, became instrumental in ensuring a number of morality provisions were included in the contract. First, she lobbied effectively for tips to be prohibited.[398] Additionally, an umbrella morality clause was included in this standard contract, which, in turn, became the legal instrument that rescue operations used to raid and search businesses for women at risk of falling into immorality.

The ILO had undertaken a study on the moral protection of *artistes* in music halls at the request of the Committee.[399] This issue was raised at the Committee's very first meeting, with Harris recommending the ILO conduct an enquiry on the issue (see Early Days Chapter). Varlez

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[396] 1928 Sainte-Croix Report.
[397] 1928 Minutes.
[398] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[399] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.

had advocated on behalf of the Committee at the ILO, ensuring a study was undertaken.[400] The ILO sent questionnaires out to its member states, requesting information on the moral and material protection of *artistes* in music halls.

Varlez summarized the inquiry's surprising findings in his statement to the Committee.[401] Contrary to the beliefs of the Committee, the ILO found that the number of women and girls working in music halls and *cabarets* was actually very small.[402] With regard to national laws and regulations, the ILO did not discover special laws or regulations on the protection of labour in the case of "music-hall allied artistes".[403] However, the Report did find that private organizations had effectively protected *artistes* through standardizing collective employment contracts for travelling troupes in Europe.[404] Varlez maintained that strengthening terms in the collective agreement could effectively abolish all abuses in music halls.[405]

Further, through the work of professional associations in Europe, the ILO Report found that the industry was much more standardized than had been previously assumed. In Europe, Varlez explained that most employment was obtained through professional associations or joint employment exchanges. These professional associations worked together to supervise music hall employment, known as syndicates, to standardize the conditions of employment generally, through

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[400] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[401] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[402] 1928 Minutes, Annex 2: Material and Moral Protection of Artistes in Music-halls and similar Places of Amusement travelling abroad under a Contract of Employment: Memorandum by M. Varlez (International Labour Office) and Annex 2(a) Material and Moral Protection of Artistes in Music-halls and Similar Places of Amusement travelling abroad under a Contract of Employment: Supplementary Note by M. Varlez (International Labour Office) at 69. The report states: The truth is that the persons referred to in this resolution- at the outside, a couple of thousand artistes employed in music-halls, dancing-saloons and other similar establishments touring abroad under a contract, scattered throughout some fifty sovereign states- form ***but a microscopic group amid the teeming millions of the globe***; they have, therefore, like almost all insignificant groups, been hitherto neglected by legislator and philanthropist alike.
[403] 1928 Minutes, Annex 2, 68.
[404] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[405] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.

collective engagement contracts. Varlez maintained that standardizing employment contracts for *artistes* further would abolish all abuses in music halls.

The ILO Report notes that in "more than one instance" the local rescue workers were given special powers under legislation aimed at increasing their policing powers.[406] In these countries, which were not listed, there had been an attempt to give moral reformers the power to investigate music halls and enforce employment contracts. The Report noted in more than one instance, states had combined official and private action by assigning to professional or charitable organizations a definitive protective role, together with special powers. These legislated policing powers included: the right to inspect employment contracts, change their terms, and make them enforceable by law. Volunteer police were empowered to enter and inspect music halls without warrants, in order to determine whether the establishments were "protecting the morals of women".[407]

One issue the Committee rallied around was a call for the ILO to recommend the prohibition of particular clauses of artiste employment contracts.[408] This suggestion was led by the British representative and picked up by Sainte-Croix. She noted that most of the organizations that she represented on the Committee advocated strongly for the question of *prohibiting tips* in music halls. She stated that *artiste* contracts should stipulate that the *artistes* cannot ever be compensated with tips because it puts them in morally dangerous contact with the patrons of the music halls.[409]

Varlez encouraged the Committee to develop a subcommittee to develop a questionnaire on issues the Committee would like the ILO to discuss at the ILO conference in Havana and circulate to member states.[410] In other words, he personally offered to ensure that further enquiry began immediately. He maintained that the ILO was eager to hear from the Committee and would

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[406] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[407] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[408] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[409] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[410] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.

circulate a questionnaire created by the subcommittee to its member governments. With this, a subcommittee was formed to draw up the text of the questionnaire, which would be brought back to the Committee for approval later in the Seventh Session.[411]

Varlez was acting as a very important point of connection between the Committee and the ILO. Positioning himself as a representative and advocate of the Committee in the debates, we can begin to recognize the position of authority the Committee held on the issue of *artistes* in music halls within international bodies. Their negative response to the ILO report was not met with resistance or argument, but a unique opportunity to direct the policy and future research of the ILO. Directing the ILO to study particular aspects of these employment contracts, the Committee was mobilizing international attention to the issue of *artistes* in music halls. The ILO would not have recommended tipping be prohibited in music halls had Sainte-Croix not recommended its inclusion in the ILO study.[412] This overlapping of interests and actors between the ILO and Committee resulted in collaborative international attention to *artiste* contracts of employment and restrictive travel regulations on *artistes*.

16.2 Morality Clauses in Employment Contracts

The Geneva Group, which included Varlez, worked together to create a standard employment contract that was used as the legal instrument to raid music halls and cabarets around Europe by local volunteer morality police. The Committee became instrumental in developing a body of transnational employment law that was used *instead of criminal law* to search cabarets and music halls. Without the work of the Committee, these morality provisions would not have been included in the standard contract, and local rescue operations would not have had virtually unlimited access to search and raid music halls and cabarets. The work of the Committee provided

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[411] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.
[412] 1928 Minutes, Second Meeting, 10.

an alternative legal basis for local volunteer morality police to conduct raids; national criminal laws with their corresponding cumbersome warrant processes were no longer required.

The development of these morality clauses is one of the key governance changes that occurred during this period: a shift towards employment law as the legal instrument by which rescue operations were carried out. Employment law, particularly morality clauses in standard contracts for music halls and cabarets, provided the legal basis for warrantless searches of these establishments. Rather than rely on provisions of the criminal law, rescue workers began to enforce morality clauses in standard contracts with vigilante searches of places they considered possibly immoral. The Geneva Club played a pivotal role in creating broad overarching morality clauses that allowed for a great deal of discretion by rescue workers themselves.

The ILO and Committee were keenly involved in the regulation of *artistes* in music halls.[413] This resulted in an explosion of materials being created on the subject at the international and national levels. International attention to this group of women resulted in a standard contract being created by the ILO in consultation with the Committee. This standard contract included provisions regarding the morality of the establishment where the woman is travelling to work. This standard contract was taken up by the employment agencies for *artistes*, and became commonplace among music halls in Europe and North America during the Glory Years.[414] If a music hall was deemed morally unfit by rescue workers, the *artistes* would be denied a passport to travel.[415] The establishment itself could also face fines or closure, as these rescue workers would often work in

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[413] 1928 Minutes, Annex 2: Material and Moral Protection of Artistes in Music-halls and similar Places of Amusement travelling abroad under a Contract of Employment: Memorandum by M. Varlez (International Labour Office) and Annex 2(a) Material and Moral Protection of Artistes in Music-halls and Similar Places of Amusement travelling abroad under a Contract of Employment: Supplementary Note by M. Varlez (International Labour Office) at 69.
[414] 1928 Annex 2, 69.
[415] 1928 Annex 2, 69.

collaboration with the vice police during the interwar period. The woman agents would "save" whomever they could convince to enter rescue homes during these raids.

Today law enforcement is known to gain warrantless access to establishments with the use of liquor license searches. The use of the morality clause in the employment contract appears to have had a similar effect of permitting warrantless access to music and dance halls. In a similar way, both searches are bypassing criminal warrant procedures and standards. However, in this historical case, the legal impetus for these warrantless searches is a standard form contract developed by the Committee and ILO. Regardless of its legality, this method worked very well for the rescue workers and they continued to use morality clauses in employment contracts to search and shut down "immoral" establishments of all kinds during the Glory Years.

17 Development of Soft Law

The Committee created a significant body of information. Every year the Committee met, it published and distributed the minutes along with annexes.[416] During the Glory Years, these minutes and annexes were over 200 pages and included detailed minutes of the discussions in Geneva, reports of the volunteer organizations, expert reports, subcommittee reports, draft conventions and a report from the Secretariat, Dame Crowdy.[417] This large collection of policy was printed and published annually, and distributed to governments and volunteer organizations. In other words, these minutes and annexes were not being created only to collect dust in Geneva. They were actually being sent to women's organizations along with questionnaires to

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[416] 1928 Minutes, 1929 Minutes, League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children Minutes of the Ninth Session held at Geneva, Switzerland from April 20 April 9 2030, C.246M.121.1930.IV.[C.T.F.E./9 session/P.V. ("1930 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, League of Nations Traffic in Women and Children Committee Minutes of the Tenth Session held at Geneva from Tuesday, April 21st to Monday, April 27th, 1931, C.401.M.163.1931.IV ("1931 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva.

[417] See the 1930 and 1931 Minutes.

communicate directly with the Committee on policy issues they were studying.[418] In this way, the Committee created a large body of soft laws but also had an effective way of distributing those policies to volunteer organizations working on the ground.

Every year the Committee issued a set of Resolutions, which were included in the published minutes as well as sent to the General Assembly for review.[419] The Resolutions, included as an Appendix, dealt with the issues of importance to the Committee, and spoke to an audience of volunteer organizations and government officials. They called on governments to enact national laws in accord with the Convention on the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children of 1921 [the "Convention"].[420] The punishment of *souteneurs* was dealt with consistently in the Resolutions, calling for greater attention to punishment and capture of these men. Resolutions on the repatriation of prostitutes and the enforcement of the 1923 Obscenity Convention appear annually,[421] as do resolutions to abolish the age limit in the Convention, making all prostitution by definition also sex trafficking regardless of the consent or agency of the woman involved.[422] Another frequent theme within the Resolutions during the Glory Years is a consistent push for a Second Enquiry, as well as increasing pressure on governments to criminalize prostitution in the dominions, colonies and mandated territories.[423]

The expert reports, subcommittee reports and reports from volunteer organizations were very useful for volunteer rescue workers engaged in debates about these issues.[424] They provided

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[418] See 1928 Minutes, 138 where it is resolved that despite the cost, the Minutes will continue to be printed and distributed by the Secretariat.
[419] 1928 Minutes, 1929 Minutes, Annex 12, 133, 1930 Minutes, Annex 11, 210, 1931 Minutes, Annex 19, 92.
[420] 1928 Minutes, 1929 Minutes, Annex 12 133, 1930 Minutes, Annex 11, 210, 1931 Minutes, Annex 19, 92.
[421] 1928 Minutes, 1929 Minutes, Annex 12 133, 1930 Minutes, Annex 11, 210, 1931 Minutes, Annex 19, 92.
[422] 1928 Minutes, 1929 Minutes, Annex 12 133, 1930 Minutes, Annex 11, 210, 1931 Minutes, Annex 19, 92.
[423] 1928 Minutes, 1929 Minutes, Annex 12 133, 1930 Minutes, Annex 11, 210, 1931 Minutes, Annex 19, 92.
[424] See the voluntary organizations' reports attached to the minutes of each Committee Meeting, including: 1922 Minutes, Annex 4: Report on the work of the Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls; Annex 5: Report on the work of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls; Annex 6: Joint letter from the International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls and the Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls; Annex 7: Report on the work of the International Catholic Association for the Protection of

what was then considered sociological proof that the abolitionist policies were effective. These reports on issues such as employment of women abroad in music halls, were additional arsenal in any policy debate volunteer women may encounter in their endeavours.

Other key sources of international law that the League Committee created during the period was the 1923 *Obscenity Convention* along with many draft conventions amending the 1921 Convention which the Committee was formed to administer.[425] These draft conventions included the *Draft Additional Protocol for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children from September 1921* (published in the 1931 Minutes). Some of the draft conventions included in the minutes were written by the International Bureau and not the League Committee at all. For example, the *Draft Treaty on the Repatriation of Prostitutes* was drafted by the International Bureau and included in the Appendices to the 1929 Minutes.[426] While this draft convention does not make it into final form, the issue of repatriation remained a central theme during the Glory Years, with Resolutions being issued, and hours dedicated to its study and discussion during the Committee Meetings.

These efforts at international law-making were widely distributed. They could be used as a basis upon which volunteer rescue work was carried out. However, in many countries, the national laws were following the international trends towards increased criminal laws for

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Girls; Annex 8: Report on the work of the International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children; Annex 9: Report on the work of the Women's International Organizations. 1931 Minutes, Annex 3: Report of the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children for 1930; Annex 4: Report of the International Union of Catholic Women's Associations for 1930; Annex 5: Report of the "Federation international des Amies de la jeune fille" for 1930; Annex 6: Report of the International Women's Associations for 1930; Annex 7: Report of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for 1930; Report of the "Association catholique international des oeuvres do protection de la jeune fille" for 1930.

[425] See for example, 1931 Minutes, Annex 10, Appendix: Draft Additional Protocol to the 1921 Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children (Punishment of Sountenuers), 92, and 1929 Minutes, Annex 4: Report of the international Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children for 1928, 111.

[426] 1931 Minutes, Annex 10, Appendix: Draft Additional Protocol to the 1921 Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children (Punishment of Sountenuers), 92, and 1929 Minutes, Annex 4: Report of the international Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children for 1928, 111.

immorality and vagrancy. For example, the 1929 Secretariat Report noted that strict criminal laws had been enacted against immorality and vagrancy in Belgium, Bulgaria, Cuba, Finland, French Colonies and Mandated Territories of Cameroons and Togoland, Germany, Great Britain, British Colonies, Possessions, Protectorates and Mandated Territories of Ceylon, Iraq, New Hebrides and Southern Rhodesia, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Siam, and Spain.[427]

In other words, the rescue workers on the ground had a large body of international and national law to operate within during the interwar period. Belgium for example, enacted a law mandating hard labour for any woman or child found to be living immorally.[428] This legislative climate created a hospitable environment for rescue workers to operate without criminal warrants or official appointment, but still well within the national and international laws being promulgated during the Glory Years.

18 Feminist Calls to Punish Souteneurs

The campaign to punish *souteneurs* originated from a genuine feminist concern that women were being punished unequally to men for the same crime. This led to powerful voices on the Committee, particularly Avril Sainte-Croix's, demanding a campaign for the equal punishment of men. The feminist origins of this campaign were rooted in a simple argument of equality. The campaign to punish *souteneurs* ended up taking on an entire life of its own once governments understood the political advantages to prohibitions on living on the avails of prostitution.

One of the most enduring legacies of the interwar campaign against *souteneurs* was to develop a system of robust national vagrancy laws, which could be used against minority populations. The international campaign resulted in the passage of national laws against

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[427] 1929 Minutes, Annex 4, 107-108.

[428] 1928 Minutes.

souteneurs, laws that became pivotal in political battles against the labour movement and fascist campaigns against immorality. Three examples of national laws are canvassed below: Poland, Italy and Great Britain. Fascist political groups were governing two of the three, Poland and Italy. Each of these newly formed fascist states used laws against *souteneurs* and sex trafficking to carry out general campaigns against immorality and vagrancy.

18.1 Vagrancy Laws and *Souteneurs*

The second part of the First Enquiry sets out national laws for the punishment of *souteneurs*.[429] The First Enquiry released the second part of its report during 1927 and the Committee discussed national laws against the punishment of *souteneurs* during the 1928 Meeting.[430] The national laws canvassed below demonstrate two important facts about national laws against *souteneurs*. First, laws punishing *souteneurs* were under the category of vagrancy offences. The laws on procuring are on the other hand under the category of indecent offences. Second, the national laws described below set out extremely severe punishments for vagrants, which could include *souteneurs*. It appears disturbingly common for national laws to provide for exile without trial, or segregation in labour colonies and workhouses for anyone without a visible means of subsistence. The criminal laws regarding vagabondage being canvassed on the Committee are striking in their severity and lack of judicial oversight.

18.2 National Vagabondage Laws

The First Enquiry set out each country's laws regarding *souteneurs*, and Members on the Committee canvassed aspects of their countries laws that were particularly noteworthy.[431] During these discussions at the meeting in 1928, the British representative, Miss Wall explained that under

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[429] First Enquiry,.
[430] 1928 Minutes, 35.
[431] 1928 Minutes, 35.

English criminal law the *souteneur* lives off the immoral earnings of women.[432] There were two different categories of offenses for procuring and for souteneurs. Miss Wall explained that procuring is a one-time offense under the category of indecent offenses. These offenses cannot be proven unless and until the commercial transaction for sex is completed. *Souteneurs*, on the other hand, fall under the category of vagabondage offenses. Living off the immoral earnings of women was a habit of living, a continuous state. So long as "habitual" was defined broadly, it was easier to arrest for a lifestyle.

Each of the national laws discussed on *souteneurs* at the Committee shared this conception of "living off immoral earnings" as a crime in the category of vagabondage and not indecent offenses.[433] These countries included England, Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Spain. These national criminal laws against vagabondage were broad enough to include *souteneurs* and carried severe penalties.

According to the country reports discussed in Geneva, in England, a 1914 law provided for corporal punishment of *souteneurs*.[434] In Germany, a 1900 law made living off immoral earnings a criminal offense. Under this definition it is also a crime to "habitually or out of egoism protect them (sex workers)" and carries a sentence of five-years hard labour. In Italy, a special court was established that was empowered to "exile delinquents without a trial". Similarly, in Belgium an 1891 Law of Vagabondage provided for the segregation of anyone considered to have no visible means of subsistence. These people were then sent either to a labour camp in a colony or to a workhouse.

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[432] 1928 Minutes, 35.
[433] 1928 Minutes, 35.
[434] Country reports included reports for Germany, England, Italy, and Belgium.

The Committee discussed how difficult it can be to establish "habitually living".[435] Miss Wall explained that in different jurisdictions there were different understandings of what counted as "habitual". Likewise, Dr. Hein explained that these convictions were difficult because the women often support the men. Dr. Hein advocated the system in Belgium of segregation as the most effective way to punish *souteneurs*. Ms. Wall maintained this system of internment provided very satisfactory results. The Women's Associations were unanimously in favour of increasing penalties inflicted on *souteneurs*. They were trying to obtain stricter measures of repression against *souteneurs* and while waiting for stricter criminal laws, were urging present penalties to be rigorously applied.[436]

19 Criminal Penalties for Immoral Earnings and Lifestyles

The Committee discussion in 1928 of laws currently in place in many European countries reveals that laws against *souteneurs* were under the category of vagabondage and provided for severe penalties. In 1929, the Committee continued its work on unifying criminal laws in Europe on *souteneurs*.[437] They wanted the laws of all members of the League, particularly all European countries, to adopt severe laws against *souteneurs*.[438]

In furtherance of this goal, Miss. Wall submitted a resolution in 1929 recommending countries adopt increased police powers to arrest *souteneurs*.[439] In explaining this resolution, Miss. Wall outlined a very effective procedure in England where special warrants were issued for *souteneurs*.[440] Under English law, all that was required for a warrant to search a brothel was what was known as "testimony of a reason to suspect." This permitted warrants to be issued for homes

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[435] 1928 Minutes, 35.
[436] 1928 Minutes, 115.
[437] 1929 Minutes, 52.
[438] 1929 Minutes, 52.
[439] 1929 Minutes, 139.
[440] 1929 Minutes, 52.

without evidence. This was the kind of increased police powers that Miss. Wall was recommending the League Members adopt in their own national criminal procedure. She argued that because *souteneurs* were illusive individuals, wide powers such as these were extremely desirable.[441]

The Belgium representative M. Maus was in support of this recommendation.[442] He advocated for a broad definition of *souteneurs*, similar to the arguments made by Avril de Sainte-Croix in 1927. He argued that it was best to define *souteneur* broadly so that it could have the widest possible application. In this respect, he argued that a *souteneur* should include anyone who does any of the following things: aids a prostitute against the police; might be living on immoral earnings of women; or might recruit women for brothels. Also, in support of increased police powers against *souteneurs*, the French representative detailed a French law that prohibited residence of certain individuals in certain areas. Bourgois explained this law made it possible to exclude *souteneurs* from large towns around France.

The debate in Geneva continued to focus on the punishment of *souteneurs* and the desirability of unified criminal laws in Europe on the subject.[443] This discussion during the 1928 meeting is illustrative of how the Committee was conceptualizing *souteneurs*. It appears that they saw the principals and *souteneurs* as falling in the same category. As discussed in the previous chapter, the First Enquiry set out two distinct categories of principals and *souteneurs*. These two groups were primarily separated by economic status: principals being considered at the top of the hierarchy because of their wealth. *Souteneurs*, on the other hand, were characterized as "low-down rascals", working class immigrants who were also often involved in drinking establishments and

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[441] 1929 Minutes, 52.
[442] 1929 Minutes, 52.
[443] 1929 Minutes, 55.

gambling halls. The national laws canvassed in 1928 also demonstrated how *souteneurs* were considered in the class of "delinquent vagrants" who had no visible means of subsistence.[444] The Committee's discussion during 1929 demonstrates that this distinction between principals and *souteneurs* was ignored. For example, M. Posner, the Polish representative, provided a very interesting description of what he considered the personal and psychological characteristics of *souteneurs*. Posner recalled that *souteneurs* were not necessarily members of the lower classes of society but included many men in high places. Posner explained that one of the necessary characteristics of *souteneurs* was physical strength: "For since *souteneurs* frequently protected many women at the same time, they sometimes aroused the jealousy of other members of their profession, which led to struggles and occasionally, indeed, to play with the knife".[445]If this description of the physical prowess of *souteneurs* seems fictional, that is because it is. Posner goes on to call attention to the novel entitled "Le chemin de Buenos-Ayres", which be claims contains "a great mass of carefully observed facts, and several pages had been devoted to the psychology of the *souteneur*".[446]

The discussion on *souteneurs* then focused more directly on what the definition should be. The French representative M. Luc canvassed the possibility of using the French definition. M. Le Luc explained, "if he had spoken of the French laws of procuring, it was with the object of attempting to find a more accurate definition for that term. The French law defined as a *souteneur* anyone who habitually, and with a view to sharing in her earnings, incited a woman to commit immoral offences or to solicit".[447] However, Miss Wall from England along with M. Le Luc's support was concerned that the French legal definition was too narrow to combat the cunning and

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[444] 1929 Minutes, 55.
[445] 1929 Minutes, 55.
[446] 1929 Minutes, 55.
[447] 1929 Minutes, 57.

illusive nature of *souteneurs*. The Committee decided to form a subcommittee on *souteneurs*. The purpose of the subcommittee was to study the laws of national governments and draft an international protocol on the punishment of *souteneurs*. The following three Committee members were elected onto the sub-committee: Miss. Wall, M. Maus and M. Luc.

20 Draft Protocol on Punishment of *Souteneurs*, 1931

The subcommittee worked throughout the year to draft a *Protocol on the Punishment of Souteneurs, Protocol to the International Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children from September 1921*, which was first presented to the Committee in 1931 (the "Draft Protocol").[448] This Draft Protocol set out a definition of *souteneurs* and listed the criminal procedure that should be applied to this special class of offenses.[449] "Souteneur" was defined in Article 1 as:

> The High Contracting Parties agree to punish any person of either sex (souteneur) who is recognised to be guilty of aiding or assisting the prostitution of another habitually or for personal gain, or of exploiting such other person by deriving from such prostitution the whole or part of his or her livelihood.[450]

This definition was met with sharp debate on the Committee in 1931.[451] The French representative M. Bourgois was opposed to the definition because it included *madames*. France still had legal prostitution and licensed houses which in practice were run by female *madames*. M. Bourgois objected to this definition because it criminalized an otherwise legal profession in France, managing a licensed brothel. Later iterations of the Draft Protocol removed gender parity from the

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[448] 1931 Minutes, 21.
[449] 1931 Minutes, 21.
[450] 1931 Minutes, Annex 10: Report to the Committee to the Council on the Work of its Tenth Session Appendix: Draft Additional Protocol to the 1921 Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children (Punishment of Souteneurs) at 92 ("Draft Protocol").
[451] 1931 Minutes, 21.

definition of *souteneurs*. This was done in order encourage countries like France, which still had regulated systems of prostitution to nonetheless sign the convention.

The following six articles of the Draft Protocol set out criminal procedures and punishments of *souteneurs*.[452] Article 2 provided that the *souteneur* shall be deemed guilty of a special offence which cannot carry a punishment less than procuring. Article 2 also demanded that signatory countries punish *souteneurs* by taking away their political and civil rights if that was allowed in the national legal system. Article 3 set out the circumstances when punishment should be increased. These included the following: "if the victim was a minor or if the *souteneur* was the husband, or a close relation of the victim; if he employed violence, threats, false pretences, abuse of authority or power; of if he has already been convicted of the same offence".[453]

As a general rule, the recommendation was that *souteneurs* should not be given bail and *souteneurs* were deemed lawfully included in the list of offenders for which extradition may be granted.[454] De Wiart from Belgium believed the Protocol was an excellent and innovative way to fight *souteneurs*. He stated that "the draft Protocol contained a number of excellent innovations. In view of the particularly serious nature of the offence committed by the *souteneurs*, which implied an exception degree of perversity, they should in no event be allowed bail…As *souteneurs* were usually cosmopolitan persons without any clearly-defined nationality."[455]

The Draft Protocol also mandated jurisdiction to arrest *souteneurs* even if they had committed no crime in the country they are being arrested in (Article 7).[456] In addition to these criminal procedures and punishments, the Draft Protocol set out administrative penalties that might also be used to punish *souteneurs* such as Article 5 which read:

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[452] Draft Protocol, 92.
[453] Draft Protocol, 92.
[454] Draft Protocol, 92.
[455] 1931 Minutes, 20.
[456] 1931 Minutes, 20.

> Apart from the chief penalties, the *souteneurs* shall be made liable to additional penalties or special administrative measures and measures of security, such as refusal to issue a permit of residence or passport, compulsory residence, local banishment, police translocation detention in compulsory labour institution and houses of correction and also deportation of foreign *souteneurs*.[457]

The Committee Members were in broad support for these provisions in the Draft Protocol.[458] Government representatives thought that it was necessary to provide enhanced law enforcement powers to police *souteneurs*.

Likewise, the volunteer organizations on the Committee were all undertaking campaigns at local levels to encourage increasing the punishment of *souteneurs*. During 1930, the International Bureau held its own international convention on the punishment of *souteneurs*.[459] At the conclusion of this conference, a resolution was issued calling for increased punishment of *souteneurs* by national governments. The Catholic Association was also focusing its attention in the necessity of increasing punishment of *souteneurs*, as were the International Women's Associations represented by Avril de Sainte-Croix.[460]

This fervour on the Committee to ensure maximum punishment for *souteneurs* led them to issue the following statement to governments following the Draft Protocol:

> The Traffic in Women and Children Committee considers that the penalties and measures laid down in the Protocol relating to *souteneurs* should be regarded

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[457] 1931 Minutes, 20.
[458] 1931 Minutes, 21.
[459] 1931 Minutes, 56.
[460] 1931 Minutes, 12.

> as only a minimum which it is desirable each State should exceed in the direction of severity.[461]

The Committee also explicitly encouraged judges and law enforcement to enquire strictly into the means of livelihood.[462] This is because the Committee considered *souteneurs* to have cunning and skill at hiding the true nature of their livelihood. The Minutes state: "the Committee was also of the opinion that, in view of the tricks and cunning generally employed by the *souteneur*, the judicial authorities should enquire strictly into his means of existence, as this would make it easier to collect evidence of his guilt".[463]

In 1931, after approving of the Draft Protocol, the Committee submitted it to member governments of the League of Nations for comment.[464] These comments were not promising, leading some Members of the Committee to conclude in 1932 that it was unlikely criminal procedure for punishments could be reached by international agreement.[465] The discussion was then postponed for another year while the local volunteer organizations had an opportunity to comment. The Reorganization that took place in 1932 had a dramatic effect on the discussion of the punishment of *souteneurs*.[466] The subject received much less attention after 1932.[467] However it remained a permanent subject on the agenda for the tenure of the Committee.[468] The Legal Subcommittee continued until 1935 to work on the Draft Protocol, with annual updates on their progress at the Committee.[469]

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[461] Draft Protocol, 92.
[462] 1931 Minutes.
[463] 1931 Minutes.
[464] Draft Protocol, 92.
[465] League of Nations Traffic in Women and Children Committee Eleventh Session, Minutes of the Meeting held at Geneva, April 4th, 1932, C.T.F.E.11thSession/P.V.1 ("1932 Minutes"), League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland at 5.
[466] Joint Reorg Session,.
[467] 1934 Minutes and 1937 Minutes.
[468] 1934 Minutes and 1937 Minutes.
[469] 1934 Minutes and 1937 Minutes.

20.1.1 Fascist Campaigns Against Immorality

20.1.1.1 Poland

Campaigns against immorality were undertaken by the newly formed fascist government in Poland with vigour, accompanied by increased police powers and criminal laws against immorality. Poland became a fascist state in 1926 and during the 1927 Committee meeting there was significant progress reported by the newly formed fascist government.[470] The Polish representative on the Committee, M. Posner was thrilled to announce his government's progress.[471] He explained that during the year 1926, the Polish government had "dealt with" 15,000 women and girls; this is more than 8,000 more than during the previous year.[472] In other words, since the fascists took control of Poland in a *coup*, they had more than doubled the number of cases in a single year.

Poland also started a campaign during that first year in 1926 to bring all Polish women working as sex workers abroad back to Poland.[473] Polish authorities requested information from other European governments on all Polish women registered as sex workers.[474] They requested this information so that these women could be repatriated to Poland. Italy reported in 1927 that they had sent requests for this information to police offices and would give Polish authorities any Polish girls they found.[475] The Polish state also supported a criminal campaign against immorality and special police forces to combat prostitution.[476] Avril Sainte-Croix, the representative of the women's organizations wished to express her "entire satisfaction with the effort in Poland against

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[470] 1927 Minutes, 44.
[471] 1927 Minutes, 44.
[472] 1927 Minutes, 44.
[473] 1927 Minutes, Annex 3: Summary of Annual Reports for the Year 1925, Prepared by the Secretariat, Submitted to the Committee on April 27th, 1927, 81.
[474] 1927 Minutes, 81.
[475] 1927 Minutes, 81.
[476] 1928 Minutes, 25.

the traffic".[477] She noted the remarkable work being done in Poland under the newly formed government, and wished to congratulate M. Posner on the record.[478]

20.1.2 Mussolini and Railway Missions

From the perspective of newly formed fascist governments, the sex trafficking movement offered some unique opportunities for collaboration. In particular, the railway missions provided a quasi-official border police to carry out government policy. More deeply, however, the sex trafficking movement and its popularity with the religious communities in Europe provided an opportunity for newly formed fascist governments to gain moral legitimacy. This phenomenon is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in Italy, where a complicated relationship developed between the Pope and Mussolini.

The Pope recognized and endorsed the Mussolini government when the Lateran Accords were concluded in 1929. In consideration for recognition from the Pope, Mussolini recognized the Catholic Church as the only official religion of Italy.[479] With this Papal collaboration, the fascist campaign against immorality had acquired a well-developed system of railway missions in Italy. There is a marked difference in the Italian government's policy with respect to sex trafficking after the Lateran Accords. The Italian representatives at the Committee had taken a predominately backseat role in the debates leading up to 1929.[480] This is likely due in part to the fact that Italy maintained a system of brothels that were licenced by the state (licensed brothels). This system of state regulation was hotly debated at the Committee.[481] Prior to 1929, Italy had mostly taken a passive position on the Committee, occasionally objecting to claims made by the abolitionists

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[477] 1928 Minutes, 25.
[478] 1928 Minutes, 25.
[479] 1928 Minutes, 25.
[480] See for example the relative dearth of debate from the Italian representative in the inaugural year of the Committee, 1922 Minutes.
[481] For a discussion of this debate see Limoncelli, *"First International Movement"*.

(those who wanted to abolish state sanctioned brothels). However, there is a fascinating shift that occurs after the signing of the Lateran Accords: the Italian government becomes keenly interested in the Catholic railway missions.

1930 marked a very active year for the Mussolini government in the regulation of morality. Mlle. Dalmazzo notes that "Italy and the Papacy are cooperating in what was in part a religious effort but also a joint attempt to elevate the ethical and moral situation of the Italian nation".[482] The International Catholic Association Report noted that Mussolini had taken a great interest in the activities of the Association that year.[483] Mussolini met directly with members of the National Offices of the Catholic Association and requested they open new branches in Bari, Syracuse and Messina.[484] These additional offices were opened within a year.

The Mussolini government also redrafted the criminal code, with the stated intention to "increase the social activity of the state". In addition to the creation of a new criminal code, a series of laws were passed in 1929, which aimed at increasing collaboration between the Catholic Associations responsible for station work and the police.[485] As a result of these new laws, coupled with a personal interest from Mussolini, the station work in Italy not only increased, but also became concerned with carrying out fascist emigration and criminal policy in collaboration with the *police de meueurs*.

21 Glory Years Railway Missions

The blossoming rescue movement of the interwar period would not have experienced the success it did but for the work of the League Committee. When the League of Nations assumed

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[482] 1930 Minutes*,* 29.
[483] 1930 Minutes, Annex 5: Report of the "Association Catholique Internationale des Oeuvres de Protection de la Jeune Fille, Submitted to the Committee on April 3, 9.
[484] 1930 Minutes, Annex 5, 89.
[485] 1930 Minutes, Annex 5, 97-98, see also 1931 Minutes*,* Second Meeting Held on Tuesday April 21, 1931, 9.

responsibility for the administration of the "white slavery" treaties, it endowed them with a perception of greater importance, legitimacy and urgency leading to an increase in signatories and contributing to greater public interest. As described by the First Enquiry:

> The responsibility assumed by the League of Nations under the Covenant widened considerably the scope of international action by securing the adherence to the Convention of many more countries, and especially those outside of Europe: it has also had the effect of calling attention to the provisions of the Conventions and of renewing and strengthening public interest in their objects.
>
> […]
>
> Before the machinery of the League of Nations was established, no steps were taken nor could readily be taken to ascertain the results of international measures. The discussions of the Advisory Committee and the making of Annual Reports by Governments have undoubtedly had a marked effect in informing the public opinion and in stimulating active measures against the traffic. If any testimony is required to the value of the League's work in this direction, a naïve one is furnished by the remarks of a *souteneur* encountered in Latvia. "It costs a lot to travel and a boy can get tripped easy now. The League of Nations is looking after that thing […] We all know what is going on". [486]

The members of the Committee and the Committee as a whole contributed to the development of rescue operations during the Glory Years in several interconnected and overlapping ways. As discussed above, the Committee developed an enormous wealth of international law on "trafficking in persons". In addition to encouraging governments to become

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[486] First Enquiry, 40.

signatories of the Traffic in Women and Children treaties, they also encouraged the proliferation of the 1923 Obscenity Treaty.

Critically, the relationships developed in the Geneva Group allowed for increased collaboration between different religious denominations of rescue workers. The relationships that developed in Geneva allowed for an unprecedented transnational organization between rescue operations of many different denominations. Prior to this period the rescue operations were relatively autonomous local groups organized around a particular church community. The web of transnational organizing underway during the interwar period impacted the rescue movement at every level from collaboration on national policy, to the local organization of small rescue operations. The Committee met for one week of the year, however the rest of the year the Committee members were working full time on their respective subcommittees and attending conferences, leading large transnational rescue operations being undertaken by their volunteer rescue workers.

Conferences were being held by each of the five volunteer organizations on a regular basis. Annual conferences were held around Europe for rescue workers to meet, network and learn how to operate effective operations in their local communities. These conferences allowed rescue workers exciting opportunities to travel and were widely attended. The relationships developed in Geneva encouraged the proliferation of these conferences and wide attendance by members of the Committee. In other words, leaders of the recue movements in different religious denominations were attending each other's conferences to encourage the spirit of cooperation among local rescue worker operations.

Transnational training programs were established in this period as well. For example, when a new community wished to establish a rescue mission, the *Amies* would send a representative of that community to Switzerland, where the local rescue workers would train the young women on

how to establish rescue workers in their local train station and/or port. This training was coupled with elaborate torchlight public meetings held by the members of the Committee around Europe during the period. These "lantern" meetings would encourage public attention to the problem of trafficking, and then pressure local politicians to take action against the traffic of women and children. This often led to increased funding from municipalities, along with newly established or refortified rescue missions in the community.

The League also contributed to the rescue movement by increasing the collaboration between volunteer rescue operations and the state. Government representatives on the Committee were increasingly aware of the issue of trafficking and undertook zealous national campaigns, as the example with Mussolini and the railway missions outlines below. As Walkowitz explains, the issue of trafficking was an enormously popular social issue and political attention to the issue was often based more in political opportunism as in an actual increase in trafficking during the period.[487] The social issue of trafficking allowed national governments to operate harsh border control and deportation campaigns under the guise of protecting women and children. Politicians began to recognize the opportunity that campaigns against immorality and trafficking had at borders and in urban centers.

In the reactionary climate amongst the railway missions (along with rescue missions generally) there was a revival of an incredibly effective system of supervision and control.[488]

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[487] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*.

[488] See the voluntary organizations' reports attached to the minutes of each Committee Meeting, including: 1922 Minutes, Annex 4: Report on the work of the Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls; Annex 5: Report on the work of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls; Annex 6: Joint letter from the International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls and the Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls; Annex 7: Report on the work of the International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls; Annex 8: Report on the work of the International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children; Annex 9: Report on the work of the Women's International Organizations. 1931 Minutes, Annex 3: Report of the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children for 1930; Annex 4: Report of the International Union of Catholic Women's Associations for 1930; Annex 5: Report of the "Federation international des Amies de la jeune fille" for 1930; Annex 6: Report of the International Women's Associations for

During the mid to late Nineteenth Century, station work developed from the volunteer activities of the local women, into the possibility for fulltime (poorly paid) employment for women in the middle and upper classes as station workers and sometimes police officers.[489] The Catholic and Protestant Churches developed specific branches for rescue mission work and rescue homes.[490] The railway missions developed into a transnational web of often- uniformed women policing virtually every station and port in Europe.[491]

The Station Work, as it was called, was a focus of the Committee's attention during their annual meetings.[492] The volunteer organizations were all involved in more general campaigns to increase the morality of the populations in which they operated.[493] These included employment agencies which would verify whether or not the employment opportunity was legitimate and in a morally acceptable venue.[494] Transnational networks developed to assist women travelling and living abroad.[495] These services, described in more detail below, varied a great deal depending on whether or not the woman was considered to have already fallen into immorality.[496]

Missionaries would visit courts and jails, and provide social services for women who were recently released from these institutions.[497] Volunteers kept close watch of the newspaper ads, and

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1930; Annex 7: Report of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for 1930; Report of the "Association catholique international des oeuvres do protection de la jeune fille" for 1930.

[489] Also see the reports from voluntary organization in 1922 where they each provide a description of their activities before and after the war. See also, League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children, 1923 Minutes, Annex 4: Report by Mme Avril de Sainte-Croix, Representative of the International Women's Associations, 44.

[490] 1922 Minutes, Annex 4: Report of the International Union of Catholic Women's Associations for 1930; Annex 5: Report of the "Federation international des Amies de la jeune fille" for 1930; and Annex 6: Report of the International Women's Associations for 1930.

[491] 1922 Minutes, Volunteer Reports, Annex 4, Annex 5, Annex 6.

[492] That is, it was the focus of the Committee's discussions during the meetings leading up to 1932, when the discussion was severely curtailed as discussed in Chapter 4. See 1928 Minutes, Third Meeting, March 13th, 1928, Examination of the Reports from Voluntary Associations, 15.

[493] 1928 Minutes, 15.

[494] 1928 Minutes, 15.

[495] 1928 Minutes, 15.

[496] 1928 Minutes, 15.

[497] 1928 Minutes, Third Meeting, Assistance given to Discharged Female Prisoners, 17.

would investigate those advertisements, which appeared to be offering indecent employment or obscene publications.[498] Rigorous propaganda campaigns against immorality were undertaken by the volunteer organizations.[499] These organizations would also lobby local and national governments for stricter criminal laws dealing with sex trafficking.[500] Of all these activities, the two cornerstones of the volunteer organizations' work during the glory years, were station work and rescue homes.[501]

Four of the five volunteer organizations had developed transnational railway missions, trying to "close the way to immorality".[502] These missionaries would work in shifts, keeping watch over the railway stations and ports.[503] The International Catholic Association described station work in the following way"Women agents, dressed in the uniform and colours of the association (yellow and white) are on duty at stations and landing stages to wait for and give information to women and girls, and to watch persons engaged in the traffic".[504]

Different Christian religious denominations often cooperated at the larger railway stations with Jewish associations coorperating in London. It was reported that these competing missionaries "work together in complete harmony":

"In any station of any importance one worker would not be sufficient. The presence of women workers belonging to different associations gives rise to a healthy spirit of competition".[505]This healthy spirit of competition would keep the station workers alert

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[498] 1930 Minutes, Annex 4: Report of the International Union of Catholic Women's Associations for 1930; Annex 5: Report of the "Federation international des Amies de la jeune fille" for 1930; and Annex 6: Report of the International Women's Associations for 1930. See also Minutes of the 1928 Minutes, Ninth Meeting, March 16th, 1928: Obscene Publications: Consideration of the Summary of Reports received from Governments, 42.
[499] 1928 Minutes, 42.
[500] 1928 Minutes, 42.
[501]1928 Minutes, 42.
[502] 1922 Minutes, International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls, Report of the Association presented to the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children June 28th, 1922, 41.
[503] 1922 Minutes, 41.
[504] 1922 Minutes, 47.
[505] 1922 Minutes, 46.

to immorality, and motivated to be *the* mission that saved (or provided safe harbour to) the greatest number of souls on any one day.

Station work required devotion to the duties of the job, and as a result these missionaries were remunerated very modestly.[506] For example, the Catholic station workers were given remuneration that was "more of an allowance than a salary".[507] This allowance was often in addition to room and board offered by a member of the religious community of which the station worker was a member.[508] Early on in the discussions of station work at the League, Mr. Harris the British Representative suggested that the station workers should all be compensated for their work.[509] Interestingly, this suggestion was met with sharp criticism from the women operating the rescue missions.[510] Devotion and zeal were considered vital characteristics of station workers and these qualities were best encouraged by spiritual conviction rather than economic reward.[511]

Station work provided women with the opportunity for exciting full-time employment and travel, even as early as 1922 The annual international and national conferences allowed women the opportunity to travel and participate in the conference proceedings at a time when women had limited opportunities for public engagement. While the pay was meagre, the network of contacts provided by the mission would enable women to travel very economically and still stay within the narrow ambit of the strict social norms for women at the time.

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[506] 1923 Minutes, Annex 4: Report by Mme Avril de Sainte-Croix, Representative of the International Women's Associations, 44; Annex 5: Report by Mlle Thurler, Representative of the "Association catholique international des Oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille", 47; and Annex 6: Report by Mme Studer-Steinhauslin, Representative of the "Federation des Unions nationales des amies de la jeune fille", 50.
[507] For example, in France they were paid 100 francs a month and in Switzerland they were paid between 50-150 francs a month, 1923 Minutes, Annex 6, 47.
[508] 1923 Minutes, Annex 6, 47.
[509] 1922 Minutes.
[510] 1923 Minutes.
[511] 1923 Minutes.

The League Committee positions, while limited to a very few numbers of women, were unprecedented international government appointments for women during the period. The Secretariat, Dame Rachel Crowdy, was appointed the head of the Social Section and had a staff working under her to complete her long list of annual tasks for the Committee conferences. Governments as well as volunteer organizations would also regularly appoint women to the Committee. Policymaking around trafficking, like rescue work itself, was seen to be primarily women's work. This provided a glimmer of hope for those women wishing to participate in the new international organizations of the interwar period.

The station work itself could take women to railway stations near and far, as transnational networks of railway missionaries developed throughout Europe, North America, and many of the colonies.[512] During the Glory Years, the organizations represented on the Committee focused their attention on the station work in Europe. These rescue missions were seen as a "home missions" meant to raise the morality of the general population, particularly the younger generation of women.[513] The First Enquiry had focused on twenty-eight primarily European countries.[514] These countries continued to be the focus of attention for station work until the publication of the Second Enquiry, when focus shifted towards the colonies. During the Glory Years, the railway missions were primarily in Europe, and because of that concentration of resources, were able to develop according to their own reports, a dense network of supervision at virtually every railway station and port in Europe.

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[512] See the reports of volunteer associations for the period between 1927-1931, namely, 1927 Minutes, 1928 Minutes 5, 1929 Minutes, 1930 Minutes, 1931 Minutes.
In particular see the reports of the five volunteer associations included as appendixes to each Session's minutes: Report of the International Union of Catholic Women's Associations; Report of the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children; Report of the "federation international des Amies de la jeune fille"; Report of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women; and Report of the "Association catholique international des oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille".
[513] First Enquiry,.
[514] Second Enquiry.

These networks mapped onto the League in sometimes surprising ways, with four of the five volunteer organizations on the Committee explicitly running rescue homes and the other expressly condoning the most punitive of Magdalene Asylums in operation during the period. The activities at the Committee did more than simply nod in approval to the rescue systems on the ground; the overlapping networks that developed during the Glory Years created a rescue movement that was a sum greater than its parts. By "network" I mean to refer to "a set of institutions, knowledge practices and artefacts thereof that internally generate the effects of their own reality by reflecting on themselves."[515]

Unfortunately, the Volunteer Organizations did not all provide statistics on the number of station workers they had under their purview. The only organization to give statistics on the initial numbers of station workers in 1922 is the International Union for the Protection of Young Girls.[516] They report in 1923, for example, that their organization had 278 rail missions, primarily in Europe.[517] This organization also owned 100 homes, and maintained relations with 388 other homes for fallen or friendless girls.[518] This organization reported being involved in 270,000 cases in 1922.[519] The rail mission for Munich alone in 1923 reported 10,623 cases.[520] Similarly, while the International Catholic Association does not give detailed statistics, they do provide an overview of the railway mission network established by 1922.[521]

In the Early Days, we see a steady increase of activity and organization among station workers. By 1925, the Catholic Association reports twenty-three National Committees, up from

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[515] See Annelise Riles, *The Network Inside Out*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 3.
[516] 1922 Minutes, Annex 7: Report on the work of the International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls.
[517] 1923 Minutes, Annex 5: Report by Mlle Thurler, Representative of the "Association catholique international des Oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille", 47.
[518] 1923 Minutes, Annex 5, 47.
[519] 1923 Minutes, Annex 5, 47.
[520] 1923 Minutes, Annex 5, 47.
[521] 1923 Minutes, Annex 5, 47.

seventeen in 1922.[522] Likewise the Jewish Association was primarily located in London and Buenos Aires when the League began its work.[523] By 1925, the Jewish Association reports having rescue workers in seven additional European countries: Germany, Poland, Belgium, France, Hungary, and the Netherlands.[524] Similarly the International Bureau reported new National Committees being formed in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece, and Danzig in 1925.[525]

21.1.1 Development of Railway Missions

The organizations engaged in station work had developed a sophisticated transnational system of surveillance by the Glory Years. New station services could develop quite quickly. All that was needed was a local community of women concerned about the moral situation of their community and one woman willing to travel and be trained in the work. Once developed, each mission was privy to a wealth of information, propaganda and soft law created by the Committee and the ILO on the issue of sex trafficking.[526]

The publication of the First Enquiry in 1926 had an extremely positive effect on the station work in Europe.[527] The First Enquiry, as discussed in the previous chapter, focused on twenty-

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[522] 1925 Minutes Annex 5: Report by Mlle. Thurler, Representatives of the "Association catholique internationale des Oeuvres de Protection de law Jeune Fille", 73.
[523] 1925 Minutes, Annex 6: Report of Mr. Cohen, Representative of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for the Year ending December 31st, 1924, 75.
[524]1925 Minutes, Annex 6, 75. There were three operations in Poland, one in Lodz, Warsaw and Luxemburg.
[525] 1925 Minutes, Annex 6, 75.
[526] 1925 Minutes, Annex 6, 75. See also First Enquiry, and the Second Enquiry.
[527] 1927 Minutes*, Annex 4: Report by Madame Avril de Sainte-Croix, Representative of the Principal International Women's Associations for the year 1926*, 105; Annex 5: Report by Madame Curchod-Secretan, Representative of the Federation des Unions nationales des Amies de la Jeune Fille for the year 1926, 113; Annex 6: Report by Baroness de Monenach, Representative of the Association catholique international des oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille for the year 1926, 115; Annex 7: Report of the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children for the Year 1926, 118; Annex 8: Report by Mr. Cohen, Representative of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for the year 1926, 122. See 1928 Minutes, particularly the discussion on volunteer association reports, and the reports themselves: Second Meeting, March 12th 1928 and Third Meeting, March 13th, 1928, 14-17; Annex 4: Report of the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children for the Year 1927, 94; Annex 5: Report of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for the Year 1927, 103; Annex 6: Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927; Report by Mme. Avril de Sainte-Croix, delegate of the International Women's Associations, for the Year 1927, 112; and Annex 8: Report of the Association catholique international des Oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille for the Year 1927, 123.

eight mainly European countries.[528] The publication of the report created a swell of public interest in sex trafficking.[529] Cohen stated in 1928 that he was "pleased to think that public opinion has been fully aroused".[530] Likewise there are reports of an atmosphere of keen public interest after the publication of the First Enquiry.[531] This public interest in sex trafficking resulted in an increase of new station workers entering the field.[532] This increased public attention to the issue of trafficking also allowed railway missions to begin to mushroom in stations around Europe.[533]

Members of the Committee were constantly travelling, participating in lantern meetings, and lobbying members of the government, police and church community to increase their rescue operations. This resulted in sustained growth of the rescue movement during the Glory Years.[534] In other words, the work of the Committee members was integrated into the work being done at the local levels. When the Committee members were not issuing soft law in Geneva, they were often travelling around Europe, attending conferences and encouraging the development of rescue work at local levels. For example, as we saw above, the Committee included a morality clause in the standard contract for travelling entertainers making it simple to search music halls and *cabarets* without a criminal warrant. Likewise, the Committee directed the priorities of the rescue workers each year by issuing resolutions and creating research reports on issues of interest at the local levels. Similarly, the Committee facilitated the dissemination of propaganda through the

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[528] 1927 Minutes Annex 4, Annex 5, Annex 6, Annex 7 and Annex 8, 1928 Minutes Annex 4, Annex 5, Annex 6, Annex 7, Annex 8.
[529] First Enquiry.
[530] 1928 Minutes, Annex 5: Report by Mr. Cohen, Representative of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for the year 1927 ("1928 Jewish Association") Report, 102.
[531] 1928 Minutes, Annex 4, International Bureau Report, 98.
[532] 1928 Jewish Report, 102.
[533] 1927 Minutes Annex 4, Annex 5, Annex 6, Annex 7 and Annex 8, 1928 Minutes Annex 4, Annex 5, Annex 6, Annex 7, Annex 8.
[534] See in particular the Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 113.

coordination of the Social Hygiene Association in the United States with the rescue operations in Europe.

The Princess Helena of Roumania approached the "Amies de la Jeune Fille" in 1926 to develop a station service there.[535] This request was met with enthusiastic support, and led to a propaganda tour in Roumania, Bulgaria, the Kingdom of the Serbs and Croats, and Hungary. A close examination of this propaganda tour and the resulting station services that were established in Eastern Europe helps to better explain how railway missions developed so rapidly during this period.

Madame Curchod-Secretan represented les Amies de la Jeune Fille at the Committee.[536] She explained in her report to the Committee for 1927 how the organization operated its propaganda tours and some of the methods that proved so successful in creating an effective system of surveillance at railway stations in Europe during the Glory Years.[537] Her work during 1927 demonstrates how integrated the members of the Committee were with local work being undertaken in Europe. The Organization received an appeal from the Princess Helena to visit Roumania where a station service was urgently required. Upon arrival, the women had two meetings with the Princess. The first was a meeting for women only, meant to encourage public support for station work, a lantern meeting held at night. It is reported that this meeting "aroused

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[535] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 113.
[536] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 113.
[537] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 113-114:
"An organizing Committee had prepared the way at Bucharest and this was of great assistance. Her Royal Highness Princess Helena Roumania took a close interest in the organization from the outset and agreed to act as patroness and to be present at our two meetings. The first of these, which was devoted to the traffic and was for women only, appeared to arouse great interest. The following day we held a public meeting, with lantern slides showing the various activities of our international organization. Several ministries and foreign legations sent representatives, and the deputy-mayor made an eloquent speech in support and encouragement of our future work in Roumania. He brought us welcome news that the municipal authorities were prepared to give a contribution equal to whatever sun we might collect".

great interest".[538] The second meeting was public and attended by male government representatives, including the Mayor.

The Report described how the mayor "made an eloquent speech in support and encouragement of our future work in Roumania".[539] In addition to his moral support, the mayor announced the city would match any contributions made to the Amies de la Jeune Fille to establish station services in Bucharest. This meeting resulted in the Ministry of Public Health and the municipality of Bucharest contributing 200,000 leis towards station work in 1927. The Bucharest Society of Amies de la Jeune Fille established a station service, sending a woman to Switzerland to learn the work at the Swiss stations. The Bucharest Society was also in negotiations with the municipal authorities to obtain a building near the station that could operate as a hostel. This was indeed, a very productive series of meetings in Roumania.

The tour's next stop was Bulgaria, where a large public meeting was scheduled in Sofia.[540] This meeting was well attended by the public and government representatives including the chief of police and a representative of the Ministry of the Interior. These large public lantern meetings were followed by private administrative meetings with the same government and police officials who expressed great interest and promised cooperation. The Metropolitan of Bulgaria expressed his approval of the plans and promised his assistance. Interestingly, this man had lived in Switzerland and had become familiar with the station workers there and appreciated the work of les Amies. With these meetings completed, the women moved on to meet with the Sofia

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[538] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 113-114.
[539] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 113-114.
[540] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 114:
"Our meeting at Sonia was very well attended by an audience which appeared to display particular interest and attention. The chief of the police, the chief of the Public Morality Section and a representative of the Ministry of the Interior were present at the public meeting and promised their cooperation. The Metropolitan of Bulgaria granted us an audience and received us with every consideration. Having lived for many years in Switzerland, he had seen our women agents in the stations and appreciated their work. He expressed his approval of our plans and promised us his assistance".

organizations currently involved in rescue work. They discovered from these meetings that the organizations currently in Sofia had the desire but no funds to include station work. With these connections made, they founded a provisional committee to study the organization of a new Bulgarian "Union des Amies de la Jeune Fille".[541]

The next stop on this trip was Belgrade, where a local organization was engaged in protective work and wanted to cooperate with les Amies.[542] The Belgrade organization united with a similar organization in Zagreb to create the Serb-Croat-Slovene "Union des Amies de la Jeune Fille". This productive stop in Zagreb included another series of public and private meetings, again attended by a wide variety of interested public officials and independent citizens. The Report notes that they were "greatly struck to find that, in all the Balkan towns, our work supplied a real need. Everywhere we were repeatedly told that we could not have arrived at a more suitable moment".[543]

This Balkan journey ended in Hungary, where supporters of les Amies already existed but the activities needed to be "organized more systematically than in the past".[544] This stop in Budapest included meeting with the Bishop of the Reformed Church, who promised his support. A public meeting was held in Budapest where from 400-500 people attended. The administrative

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[541] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 114.
[542] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, *supra* at 547 at 114: "We were glad to find at Belgrade an organization for protective work similar to our own, which expressed its readiness to cooperate with us. At the same time, inspired by a sense of patriotism which it is a pleasure to record, the ladies on the Serbian Committee decided not to join our federation as a Belgrade group, but to wait until their Croat Slovene compatriots could unite with them to for a Serb-Croat-Slovene "Union des Amies de la Jeune Fille". We carried this message to Zagreb, where it was received with the greatest satisfaction. There, too, several organisations expressed their willingness to cooperate with us. A public meeting was followed by an administrative meeting, which was attended by close upon sixty-persons of either sex, directly interested in our work and prepared to assist us".
[543] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 114.
[544] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, *supra* at 547 at 114: "Our Balkan jouney have us an opportunity of stopping in Hungary. In this country, where we already have many faithful supporters, our activities had to be organized more systematically than in the past. The Bishop of the Reformed Church was good enough to give us his patronage and to offer every facility for our work in Budapest. The Regent granted us an audience, at which he spoke with real understanding of the ravages of the traffic and the necessity of combatting it. He not only expressed himself as in full sympathy with our work but promised to assist us in every way. From 400 to 500 persons were present at the public meeting in the big round hall of the old Parliament buildings".

meetings that followed the town hall meeting resulted in a committee being established to study the best means of extending the station work in Budapest to the rest of the country.[545]

This was a particularly fruitful propaganda tour of the Balkans for les Amies, but it wasn't unusual. M. Cohen of the Jewish Association, too, had spent 1926 touring Europe.[546] In particular he visited Germany, Danzig, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Roumania, Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Belgium. This propaganda tour resulted in increased connections among the Jewish community in Europe and the development of a similar network of station work as undertaken by the Christian organizations. The Jewish Association was interested in expanding the ambit of its network and had successfully been in correspondence with Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, Panama, Cuba, Columbia, Venezuela, and Guatemala. These new stations were primarily only in the beginning stages of development (Cuba is the exception, where great progress was reported in 1926). As a result, the Jewish Association too had the bulk of its rescue workers in Europe during the Glory Years.[547]

The Catholic Association and International Bureau reported different, but equally effective strategies during 1926: both held large international conferences on sex trafficking. The Catholic Association held its Sixth International Congress in Luxembourg during the year. A representative of the League Secretariat, Mlle Colin, attended the conference, as well as the Belgium Country Representative, M. Maus. During this conference each national office gave a report on the progress of their work. As a whole they concluded "regarded as a whole, this work gave a strong impression of coordinated efforts towards the protection of women".[548]

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[545] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 114.
[546] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 114.
[547] 1927 Minutes, Annex 8: Report by Mr. Cohen, Representative of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for the Year 1926, 104.
[548] 1927 Minutes, Annex 6: Report by Baroness de Montenach, Representative of the Association catholique international des oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille, for the Year 1926, 115.

Country reports from the Luxembourg conference indicated a strong growing Catholic rescue movement in Europe.[549] In the Balkans, there was evidence of rescue missions developing. The Catholic Association had developed railway missions in Hungary, three at the stations in Budapest and twelve in the provinces. Poland too, reported rapid development during the year with four shelters built at Warsaw railway stations. Equally importantly, the countries where strong railway missions already existed reported remarkable growth.[550]

In Austria, for example, the Vienna mission multiple station workers logged a total of forty-two hours/day at five principal stations.[551] A woman worker met all trains in Vienna, and the railway employees and the police warmly encouraged this. As a token of their appreciation, a kiosk was built in the Vienna stations to accommodate the women while they worked. Similarly, Catholic associations had established thirty-six new station missions in the past few years, bringing the total to 139. France had eighty-three railway missions by 1927 and was reporting the construction of a large rescue home in Lille. These numbers indicate a strong presence of Catholic rescue workers at railway stations and ports by 1927.[552]

The International Bureau also held a conference during 1926 in Copenhagen.[553] Reports of work done by local associations from Copenhagen evidence strong and developing Bureau railway

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[549] 1927 Minutes, Annex 6: Report by Baroness de Montenach, Representative of the Association catholique international des oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille, for the Year 1926, 115.
[550] 1927 Minutes, Annex 6: Report by Baroness de Montenach, Representative of the Association catholique international des oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille, for the Year 1926, 115.
[551] 1927 Minutes, Annex 6: Report by Baroness de Montenach, Representative of the Association catholique international des oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille, for the Year 1926, *supra* at note 547 at 115.
[552] 1927 Minutes, Annex 6: Report by Baroness de Montenach, Representative of the Association catholique international des oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille, for the Year 1926, 115.
[553] 1927 MinutesAnnex 7: Report of the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children for the Year 1926, 118, "the outstanding feature on the work of the Bureau for 1926 was a conference held at Copenhagen on September 1st and 2nd for the purpose of arranging the business for a congress which is to be held in London in the last week of June 1927. These congresses are of peculiar importance in the work of the Bureau, since they take into consideration experience gained in the past and decide the line of work for the future."

missions in Europe. Bureau officials were in negotiations for a new rescue home in Austria, while Belgium reported a steady and successful year.[554] British rescue workers reported a steady and zealous year, operating out of London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Hull and Liverpool. In Hungary, 195 girls were reported to have passed through the rescue home during the year. In Poland, railway missions were developing successfully, with 15,000 girls reported to have been assisted in 1924. Bureau operatives in Poland were also looking to increase the size of two shelters developed for friendless female travelers. Preliminary steps had been taken to open a branch in Japan, and one in India. For the time being, however, Bureau personnel remained mostly located in Europe.[555]

In sum, a confluence of factors, both social and legal, led to the late 1920s and early 1930s becoming the Glory Years for rescue work in Europe. The First Enquiry, along with the propaganda work of the League Committee members, led to a swell of public interest in the topic after the Enquiry's publication in 1926. The study claimed to have found empirical proof not only that sex trafficking existed (reified in the term "the traffic"), but also that rescue work was critical in ending the evils that trafficking was believed to bring. In a climate of social, political and economic uncertainty in Europe, the fight against trafficking became enormously popular once again.

The focus of the First Enquiry was European countries; this resulted in more women wanting to join the rescue movement at a time when the focus of the work was still "at home". Politicians and law enforcement, too, saw sex trafficking as a critical issue during the period, often extending national funds to sustain and expand the station and port work. The result was a network of women agents keeping watch over virtually every major rail station and port in Europe during the Glory Years. The systems that developed, and the complicated relationship they had with law

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[554] 1927 Minutes, Annex 7, 121.
[555] 1927 Minutes, Annex 7, 121.

enforcement, described below, allowed these women to wield significant power in their station work.

21.1.2 Volunteer Morality Police

When rescue work developed before WWI, it developed separately from law enforcement or the state.[556] There was a sense among the male government officials that rescue work was God's work, it was women's work because it was moral work, and the police or state officials should not interrupt it.[557] As a result, after WWI, the rescue workers wielded significant power when deciding how to deal with any particular case. The rescue workers might not have had the power to arrest or deport individuals, but they wielded surprising authority in directing the police on how to deal with any particular case. Rescue workers would stand watch over all arrivals at railway stations and ports. When they suspected a woman might be in moral danger, they would approach her and direct her to the local services. These rescue workers had close relationships with local police and could employ their services if needed. Station workers would wear official uniforms and often had kiosks and offices at rail stations. They developed a system of surveillance which enabled them to keep watch over virtually all border crossings in many European cities. If they needed to use the police, either for an arrest, for intimidation or for deportation, they were only a phone call away.

The station workers during the interwar period directed the police how to act, not the other way around. Station workers did not have official powers to arrest or deport as police officers, but a system developed in which police officers would do the bidding of the rescue workers because of their perceived moral authority in matters related to sexuality. If the station workers suspected there was a procuration in process, they would interrupt it and have the man arrested. Rescue workers would try and persuade woman deemed immoral to voluntarily enter into a Magdalene

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[556] See Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*.
[557] Report of the International Federation of the "Amies de la jeune fille" for the year 1927, 111.

Asylum, perhaps with a police escort. If the woman did not agree to enter the Asylum, the police could be called upon to either arrest or deport the woman, depending on the national laws. Once arrested, the women would appear before the court where often rescue workers would attend. They would speak at sentencing and recommend the admission to rescue homes rather than deportation or incarceration in state-run prisons. In this way, women were being sentenced to Magdalene Asylums instead of prisons by the courts during the period. Increasingly, police departments were hiring women to work as a liaison with rescue workers on cases dealing with women and children.

21.2 Women Police Officers

There were women police operating in Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Roumania and Hungary in 1928. The women's organizations represented by Sainte-Croix were engaged in active campaigns to increase the numbers of local police. South Africa and Czechoslovakia were discussing the employment of police as a result of local agitation by women's groups. The work of the Romanian and Hungarian women agents was described with the following praise:

> The work at Bucharest has received effective support not only from the municipality, but from the Ministries of the Interior, Public Welfare and Labour. At *Cluj* (Transylvania), work at the railway station has been carried on since the spring of 1927 by two women agents, one Roumanian and the other Hungarian. The offices are in the station and two beds are available for travellers. Between June 1st and the end of October 1927, assistance was given to 127 girls. The agents meet all trains, paying particular attention to local trains, by which many inexperienced girls arrive. A procurer who had been wanted by the police

> for two years was arrested at the station, thanks to one of our agents, who caught him in the very act of abducting a girl.[558]

In 1928, the country representative for Germany presented a report on women police in Germany. This report explained the need for women police as follows:

> The police force may even be said to have developed almost maternal qualities and duties, and thus have paved the way for the entry of women.
>
> Then, again, penitentiary laws and authorities are becoming increasingly imbued with a psychological and social sense. They no longer consider only the act of which the delinquent is accused, but his personality, the material and moral conditions of his life and the various direct and indirect causes which led him to break the law. From this point of view, preliminary reports, enquiries and investigations change their character; they are in the nature of social diagnosis and require of the police official social and psychological qualities and experience.
>
> This change has had two effects. First, it has shown the necessity of improving the professional training of the police by means of social and psychological studies: and, secondly, it has permitted the employment of women for certain special duties.[559]

The women police officers were responsible for duties connected with the protection and preventive treatment of women and children of both sexes. This is the department known as the Schutzpolizei or *protective police.* The second department is part of the *criminal police* and dealt with enquiries and investigations of all criminal cases concerning women and minors. In describing the role of women police in regulating prostitution, the report said:

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[558] 1928 Minutes at 112.

[559] 1928 Minutes at 124.

> The largest clientele of the women police naturally consists of girls in moral danger. The methods employed with these girls aim at inducing them to leave of their own free will the dangerous situation in which they are placed. Preventive confinement can only be used as a last resort in cases of complete drifting and moral laxity. It is a principle with our police that, in all relations with them, these girls will have to deal with women. This means that, when girls are conveyed to hospitals, prisons, law courts or educational homes, they are always accompanied by women agents.[560]

21.2.1.1 Operations of Railway Agents

Whether working in her capacity of a women police officer or as a volunteer railway agent, the duty of the station worker was to keep watch of all the people coming and going from the railway station.[561] The objective was provide information and help to women travelers.[562] This sounds as innocuous as volunteers at airport arrivals, and sometimes it was. Other times these women were actively pursuing men they thought to be traffickers, bravely trying to save women from falling prey to dangerous evil men.[563]

Still more troubling, these station workers were not just looking out for possible traffickers; they were on the lookout for any woman who was at *risk of falling* into immorality.[564] These sometimes-zealous missionaries often interpreted immorality very broadly. If they saw an unwed mother, they would endeavour to send them to a rescue home where she would be committed and

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[560] 1928 Minutes at 124.

[561] 1925 Minutes Annex 5: Report by Mlle. Thurler, Representatives of the "Association catholique interantionale des Oeuvres de Protection de law Jeune Fille", 73

[562] 1925 Minutes Annex 5, 73.

[563] 1925 Minutes Annex 5, 73.

[564] 1925 Minutes Annex 5, 73.

her child would often be taken away.[565] For example, in London a rescue home was in operation during 1925 that removed eighteen babies from unwed mothers during the year, two of which were adopted to other families.[566] The treatment of a woman traveller was arbitrary, depending entirely on whether a station worker considered her to have fallen into immorality, very broadly construed.

For example, if a woman arrived alone and did not appear to be in imminent moral danger, she would be directed to either a special waiting room at the station (if available), or to a hostel that has been established for travelling women and girls.[567] The nature of these hostels varied from country to country and even from city to city.[568] In some locations these girls were placed into homes of Catholic, Jewish or Protestant families- depending on the rescue operation.[569] In other cases dormitory style all-women homes and cafeterias were made available.[570]

On the other hand, if one of these women agents suspected a woman was travelling with an immoral man, the agent would report this couple to the police, who would arrest or simply

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[565] For example, Mr. Cohen's report for 1925 provides numbers and statistics of the women and children that were in their rescue homes during the previous year. See 1925 Minutes, *supra* at note 99, Annex 6: Report by Mr. Cohen, Representative of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for the Year ending December 31st, 1924 Submitted to the Committee on May 21st, 1925, C.T.F.E. 232, 75.

[566] 1925 Minutes, Mr. Cohen Report, 79.

[567] For example, see 1923 Minutes, Annex 5: Report by Mlle. Thurler, Representative of the "Association catholique international des Oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille", 47.
"Homes which form safe refuges, have been established and to these girls are directed. Special Waiting Rooms are to be found in certain stations: these at our request have been fitted up in the stations themselves for the use of girls, who may thus wait under sure protection for their trains".

[568] 1923 Minutes, Annex 5, 47.

[569] See for example, 1927 Minutes, Annex 6: Report by Baroness de Montenach, Representative of the Catholique Internationale des Oeuvres de Protection de la Jeune Fille, for the Year 1926, Submitted to the Committee on April 28th, 1927, at 115 ("1927 Catholic Association Report"), where it stated that "Ireland- Most of those who make use of our homes are daughters of small farmers, more or less ignorant of the snares of large towns. They come to town to obtain employment, and care has to be exercised in placing them in families", 115.

[570] 1927 Minutes, Annex 6, 50 where it states:
Homes- Our homes are still suffering from the consequences of the war and the economic crisis. Many of them have had to close their doors. Others have developed along very different lines in response to local requirements, so as to be in a position to render the greatest possible services. Homes in the great centres of population have often opened highly popular women's restaurants on their premises. The Stettin Homes, for example, have supplied 29,000 meals in a year. The figures for the Brussels Home show an average of 200 dinners per day. In many places, which are too small to maintain a home, the Girls; Protection Societies have opened "rest rooms" for temporary visitors. Within the Federation there are at present about 100 Homes and rest rooms controlled by the Societies or working in close cooperation with them. Reference to our Directories shows 388 Homes with which we maintain relations".

deport the man under sex trafficking laws.[571] If a woman or girl appeared to be in moral danger, these women agents would intervene at the railway station. For example, the 1923 report stated: "[r]eports by our Committees attest the undoubted effectiveness of the surveillance exercised by our station workers. Recently, for instance, one of our representatives successfully intervened at Buch (Switzerland) to prevent an attempt at procuration".[572]

Any woman who was considered to have already fallen into immorality was sent to a rescue home, created specifically for the moral rehabilitation of fallen women.[573] These houses focused on work as a means to develop self-respect and moral rehabilitation.[574] The determination of which of these routes was appropriate for any particular woman traveller was determined on an *ad hoc* basis by the woman agent.[575] These agents were therefore given broad discretion to determine how they defined and conceptualized immorality. As discussed above, resolutions and studies undertaken by the League were circulated to these local missions and may therefore have helped

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[571] See for example, the 1927 Catholic Association Report, Annex 6, 50 regarding the work being done in Austria during 1926:
Austria- At Vienna our Association Railway Mission puts in a total of 42 hours work daily at the five principal stations. A woman worker meets all trains. This work is entirely disinterested and is performed by a body of 218 women trained for their work and relieving one another in a definite order. Every month they are summoned to a general meeting, when they are called upon to give account of their activities.
The police and the railway authorities warmly encourage this service; a kiosk in the hall of the principal stations has kindly been placed at the disposal of the organization.
Our Committee in Vienna works in close cooperation with the "police des Moeurs". Besides the refuge given to it by the police referred to in our report for 1925 our Committee is also in charge of a home with accommodation for 180 girls.
[572] 1923 Minutes, Annex 5: Report of Mlle Thurler, Representative of the "Association catholique international des Oeuvres de protection de la jeune fille", 50.
[573] 1922 Minutes, Report on the work of the International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls, 42 where it states that: "A special branch has been attached to our Association for the purpose of rehabilitating girls who have fallen. For these unfortunates the Association possesses several houses in which efforts are made to restore their sense of self-respect". See also Finnegan, *supra* at note 15 at 112 where she notes:
"In the reactionary climate of the 1920s and 1930s, the Irish Magdalene Movement experienced something of a revival, and ambitions for expanding and consolidating the system soared… Extensions to provide accommodation for 160 inmates were carried out during this bleak period, and the Irish Magdalene system, appalling in concept and practice, was given a further lease of life."
[574] 1922 Minutes, Report on the work of the International Catholic Association for the Protection of Girls, 42.
[575] 1922 Minutes, 42.

inform their conception of immorality. The ultimate decision of how to treat any particular woman, however, rested on these women agents.

The station workers operated as essentially a morality triage: deciding who was in need of saving and who was not. This system left women travelling alone in an extremely precarious position. If the missionaries decided a woman was at a low risk of "falling into immorality", the incursion into their lives was limited. These women would be "protected" by being placed in a hostel and supervised until they obtained employment that was considered acceptable to whoever owned the home where they were sent.[576] If these station workers saw a woman traveller as immoral or fallen, however, extremely punitive options were also available.[577] Immediate deportation or incarceration were also triage options for the women who had already "fallen". The women themselves had no say in this decision, nor did they have any means to appeal or object. They were completely vulnerable to the triage decision of the station workers, unless they could evade their attention.

21.2.2 Perversity of Station Work

The underlying objective of these station workers was to say no to all wayward or unproductive sexualities.[578] However, it would seem these women agents reveled in their task.[579] As contemporary scholar Finnegan explains, "there is no doubt that for many educated women,

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[576] As discussed above, these homes included the private residences of members of the religious community of whom the woman agent is a member, or large dormitory style homes, sometimes accompanied by large women's only cafeterias.

[577] See Finnegan, *Penance or Perish,* 15 whose history of the Magdalen Asylums in Ireland depicts how inmates in the asylums were discouraged, and even forcibly prevented from leaving- sometimes being detained for life. Women were put to work in laundries and subject to penance, harsh discipline, forced silence and prayer. Their children were taken away and they were forbidden to speak to other inmates. Women who were not sex workers but had otherwise "fallen" were targeted, particularly in the 1930s including unwed mothers, women whose only crime was literally being "too beautiful" and therefore in danger of sin or being "simple minded" and therefore in need of protection.

[578] Finnegan, *Penance or Perish,* 15.

[579] Finnegan, 15.

the work was exciting and a challenge, its pathos and urgency stimulating their reforming zeal".[580] During the reactionary climate of the period, station work would have provided an opportunity to hunt the hunter. Railway work allowed women the opportunity to participate in a world of vice that was otherwise completely forbidden to them. The language used in the annual reports and in Committee debates drips with sexual innuendos and an understanding that railway work was indeed a pleasurable experience for these women agents.[581] Adjectives like "stimulated", "fully aroused" and "penetrated" are frequently used to describe the zealous appetite of women agents for railway work.[582]

Station workers were engaged in a game of capture and seduction, a game of confrontation and mutual reinforcement when ostensibly working to protect women and girls. Foucault understood this game as attractions coupled with evasions, circular incitements that have traced around bodies and sexes, not boundaries to be crossed, but *perpetual spirals of power and pleasure*.[583] There is a pleasure that comes of exercising a power that questions, monitors, spies, searches out, palpates, brings to light.[584] Women agents were zealously engaged in searching out immorality, questioning women and children at the stations, bringing to light the dark underbelly of sex trafficking.[585] If we look at rescue work as an apparatus in relation to sexuality, we can begin to see that it was not inhibiting sexuality, but was instead operating as an inciting and multiplying mechanism.[586] The surveillance system that developed at railway stations allowed

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[580] Finnegan, *Penance or Perish,* 13.
[581] See for example the Report from Mr. Cohen for 1927 describing the effect that the first enquiry had on public opinion on the subject of sex trafficking: 1927 Minutes, Annex 8: Report by Mr. Cohen, Representative of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women for the Year 1926 122.
[582] Foucault, *History of Sexuality I,* 45.
[583] Foucault, 45.
[584] Foucault, 45.
[585] Foucault, *History of Sexuality I,* 46.
[586] Foucault, 46.

women agents to participate in a world of vice, by searching out, palpating every passenger, particularly every woman traveller, for any hint of immorality.

In this way, these station workers were not just establishing taboos or exercising the power of the law. More deeply and more powerfully, they were extending the various forms of sexuality they sought to discourage by pursuing them according to lines of indefinite penetration.[587] Every woman was a suspect, every couple needed examining to make sure they were not trying to fool the station workers. Rather than eliminate sex from public, these women agents smeared it all over every woman entering or leaving the station with their suspicious gaze. Women were assumed immoral, unless they could establish their respectability through local religious and social norms, they may not be familiar with. Sexual perversion was assumed, particularly among the working class and immigrant populations.

Rather than cleanse the stations and ports of dangerous sexual games of cat and mouse, the women agents instead just inserted themselves directly into the game. The railway work did not exclude sexuality, it attracted its varieties by means of spirals in which pleasure and power reinforced one another.[588] The surveillance work undertaken at the railway stations did not have the effect of setting up a barrier to wayward forms of sexuality. Instead it created places of maximum saturation: the railway station had become a venerable sexual mosaic of all wayward or unproductive sexualities.[589]

21.2.3 The Problem with Prevention

Prevention seemed on its face to be uncontroversial. Indeed, Karen Offen wrote a piece outlining the ways in which Avril Sainte-Croix was an intrepid crusader for feminism. In this

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[587] Foucault, *History of Sexuality I,* 47.
[588] Foucault, 47.
[589] *Ibid.*

article, the second contribution canvassed by Offen is Sainte-Croix's prevention work.[590] Offen explains that Sainte-Croix worked for economic alternatives and job training for women who were about to fall into prostitution. The Committee, headed mainly by Sainte-Croix, became increasingly interested in preventing women from turning to sex work in the first place.[591] This prevention work would include making sure women were not at risk of interacting with immoral people while they were travelling. Hostels were made available for these women to keep them safe. The three-month job-training program run by Les Ouevre Libratrice appears to be a benign and even helpful program to help women gain employment. The work of this organization is not particularly controversial, apart perhaps from the intervention in children's cases described above. So then, what was the problem with prevention work during this period?

The prevention work undertaken by organizations like Les Oeuvre Libratrice was available only to women and girls who were still considered respectable and those standards were extremely high. The other women were sent to rescue homes. The prevention work was operating in a broader system of morality whereby most women who would obtain greatest benefit from these job-training services would not have access to them. As discussed above, rescue homes were where immoral women were sent. Immoral women included sex workers, unwed mothers, lesbians, queers, survivors of sexual assault and any other foreign woman considered immoral by the station workers. This created a system where the women who desired or needed job training and education would not have access to them simply for their sexual histories, or perceived sexual histories.

Another important fact to keep in mind when discussing the prevention work of the Committee during the interwar period is that job training was a very small aspect of the prevention

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[590] Karen Offen, "Intrepid Crusader: Ghenia Avril de Saine-Croix Takes on the Prostitution Issue", *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 33, (2005).
[591] 1928 Minutes, the Report of Sainte-Croix for 1927.

work. Reports from the volunteer organizations outline what exactly what being done during the period to "prevent the trafficking". The primary prevention activity was when rescue workers would periodically visit women and girls at high risk of falling into immorality. There is no indication these rescue workers offered any kind of economic or educational services to these women. Instead, they report visiting these high-risk cases simply to offer moral support and to encourage them to enter into rescue homes.

Railway work too was described primarily as prevention work because it involved itself in the task of keeping vigilant and zealous watch over the railway stations and ports. Should anyone appear suspicious, officers would pounce in a brave attempt to prevent procuration in process. The simple presence of railway workers was seen to have a preventative effect. Women standing guard and keeping watch believed that if they were not there the station would descend into a den of sin and procuration. And so, railway work was also considered integral prevention work during the period.

Prevention work also included obscenity policing and propaganda work. As discussed in the Early Days Chapter, the rescue workers would scour newspaper ads in order to try and interrupt the procuration of women and girls to work in "immoral" establishments overseas. Censorship too was considered an important prevention measure. Prevention encompassed much more than economic measures. The Committee felt that women and girls needed to be protected from falling into immorality and that this required strict censorship of literature and cinema. Accordingly, extreme obscenity policing campaigns were undertaken under the auspices of trafficking prevention during the period.

As discussed above in the section on the Geneva Club, the ultimate goal of the Committee shifted from abolishing legal brothels, to raising the level of morality in society generally. This was an ambitious goal but one that seemed to the Committee members more likely to succeed than

lobbying efforts at the national level. Accordingly, propaganda work was considered the cornerstone of prevention work. The most important work, in the eyes of the Committee, was not providing job training to down and out women. Instead it was raising the level of morality in society generally with propaganda efforts.[592] These years were glorious for the Committee, because it was a period of time when political factors came together to create a perfect storm for an extremely effective rescue industry to develop.

What is so fascinating about the rise of women at the League of Nations during the Glory Years is precisely what historians have so far missed. As argued in the Introduction, the rise of women at the League was largely at the expense of those women they set out to save, sex workers and other "fallen" women. This is what Valverde describes as the Great Femininity Paradox of the social purity movement.[593] The language of prevention, rescue and protection was used to explain extreme discipline methods in rescue homes operating as disciplinary institutions without state oversight. This rescue system developed into a full-blown industry during the Glory Years and provided white Christian women opportunity to engage in exciting international work as station workers or in rescue homes. Even the women on the League Committee, were ultimately there because of a belief that this was women's work for women. This gendered view of rescue work created unique opportunity for women to participate in public life at a time when the vote was still unavailable to them in many countries.

22 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the Glory Years were significant because of the rise of the *souteneur* as a priority and the rescue movement was thriving during the period. The interwar campaign against *souteneurs* provides a stark example of how a feminist call for equal punishment

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[592] These efforts are described in detail in the Early Days Chapter.
[593] Valverde *Light, Soap and Water,* 13.

can develop into an entire system of criminal laws used to punish working class immigrant or racialzed men. The creation of the Draft Protocol on the punishment of *souteneurs* was important because many of its provisions were revived after WWII in the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Trafficking in Women and Children, discussed in the Conclusion. At the level of narrative, this campaign during the interwar period was critically important because it altered the character of the white slaver into its broader second iteration of the *souteneur*.

The Introduction and Early Days Chapters have argued that these racial characterizations changed during the interwar period. The Jewish and Chinese white slavers had been replaced by a broader grouping of working-class immigrant men, who became cast as the interwar folk devil. This was politically advantageous for governments because it allowed for the targeting of a greater number of minority groups. It was important too on the level of narrative, with the broadening of the racial categories of *souteneurs*, there was a greater number of individuals that required policing by the rescue movements vice police units.

The League Committee made four major contributions to the rescue movement during the Glory Years and these efforts allowed the rescue industry to develop in a way that would not have been possible but for the Committee's advocacy and policy work. First, the Committee facilitated cooperation between different denominations of religious rescue workers with unprecedented success. The League of Nations Committee organized these separate religious missions into a coordinated whole. As a result of the work of the Committee, these previously separate organizations were working increasingly well together at the local levels.

Second but nonetheless very connected, the International legal framework whitewashed rescue work with more palatable sex trafficking language. Religious missions were renamed as "volunteer organizations" and international laws couched the extremely unfair system of religious penance for immorality into a secular vocabulary of protection and rescue. Thirdly, the

Committee's work resulted in a massive body of knowledge on sex trafficking and vice. This process of information creation was actually producing the archetypes and myths that continue in today's legislative climate.

Finally, and most critically, the Committee lent legal legitimacy to the rescue movement in a number of ways that have so far been overlooked by historians. Before WWI, the rescue workers had been operating largely outside of the law. As canvassed by Finnegan, the rescue workers were seen to be doing "God's work", as a "women's mission to women". As a result, government officials would generally ignore these rescue homes and station workers. The Magdalene Asylums would operate according to the rules and procedures of the religious order running that particular house. Government officials did not visit or inspect the conditions of these homes and the inmates were not afforded legal rights to appeal in the courts.

International law making of the kind undertaken by the Committee was very new. The Committee is the first international body to create international law on sex trafficking on this scale. People were unsure what it meant and what sort of authority it had over national law. Indeed, those queries continue today regarding the legal standing of international norms within national legal systems. And so, what started happening was the development of two alternative systems of justifying extremely intrusive raids and surveillance for immoral women and evil men. Religious footing, the international legal apparatus developed at the League, and rapidly developing national laws encouraged the development of pernicious systems of morality policing and control during the Glory Years.

Chapter 4
Bifurcation of Sex Trafficking Policy: The European Psychiatric Model and Imperial Rescue Project

23 Introduction

The Glory Years were interrupted by three key changes. First was the dramatic change in economics during the early 1930s with the advent of the Great Depression.[594] The environment of debauchery and corresponding vice policing that characterized the "roaring twenties" had changed dramatically in the so-called "dirty thirties". Social purity reformers were more zealously active during the 1920s than they were during the 1930s. Part of the reason for this is simple economics. During the 1920s, America and some European centres experienced a period of economic prosperity, which allowed middle- and upper-class women to participate in volunteer rescue work outside of the home. The economic boom of the 1920s also provided increased prosperity for private citizens and governments to fund rescue operations. When the economic depression of the 1930s hit, the operations of the rescue operations were impacted by fewer volunteers and less funding. The social hysteria of the 1920s had also waned, as private citizens had less and less leisure time to devote to rescue work.

Second was the change of priorities from the local to the so-called "Far East".[595] In 1932, the Committee published the Second Enquiry, which was an examination of trafficking in the "Far East". This report spurred an increased focus on the colonies from the Volunteer Organizations in Geneva. Seizing on trends to feminize the Empire, rescue workers were increasingly travelling to far away colonies to establish rescue homes and volunteer vice police in colonial holdings. This is what I understand as the Imperial Rescue Project, the campaign undertaken by volunteer organizations in the colonies between 1932-1937. This shift took resources and rescue workers

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[594] McElvaine Robert, *The Great Depression: America 1929-1941*, (New York: Random House, 2009).
[595] The new focus was on colonial rescue operations, and the publication of the Second Enquiry.

away from European and North American operations in order to forge new rescue operations in the colonies. This resulted essentially in a thinning of resources that ultimately weakened rather than strengthened the rescue industry operations as a whole, at least in the home missions of Europe.

Thirdly, the Committee underwent reorganization in 1933 changed membership on the Committee by displacing volunteer organizations with professionals.[596] This reorganization resulted in a concomitant reduction of the space and power for women on the Committee, and much of the subtle progress that had developed during the Glory Years was pushed aside. This reorganization (the "Reorg") resulted in dramatically different relations of power and priorities. The major consequence of the Reorg was a bifurcation of sex policy between European countries and their colonies. The Reorg resulted in a shift on the Committee from viewing prostitution as a *moral* issue and saw it instead as a *medical* one. Rescue shifted from the rehabilitation of the soul, to psychiatric treatment of "feeble-minded" prostitutes.[597] This shift dramatically changed the model under which prostitution was understood on the Committee. Those involved in moral rehabilitation in Magdalene Asylums were no longer seen as experts: the psychiatrists were. But only in Europe. Because the Imperial Project was operating without direction from the Committee during the period, the colonial policies remained abolitionist, i.e. religious or morally oriented.

An unintended consequence of the Reorg was an instillation of feminist abolitionist ideas and policies in the Imperial Project. What is so interesting about studying power relations and networks, is just how complicated they really are.[598] In examining the activities of the Committee as a strategic enterprise, we begin to appreciate the unexpected impacts that this mobile,

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[596] 1934 Minutes, , 1933 Joint Reorg Session.
[597] League of Nations, Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, Geneva May 5th, 1936, C.204M.127 1936. IV., League of Nations Archive, Geneva Switzerland, ("1936 Minutes") at VII: Examination of Report of Adult Prostitutes. ("Report of Adult Prostitutes").
[598] See for example, Riles, *The Network Inside Out*.

fragmented and dispersed form of power had over time.[599] We begin to see how there has been an "incremental but now quite noticeable instillation of feminist ideas in actual legal institutional power".[600] Here I am referring to the Second Enquiry into Trafficking in Eastern Countries (the Second Enquiry or SE).[601]

This chapter outlines the Reorg and details how these structural and procedural changes had a subtle but profound impact on not only how the Committee operated, but also how it conceptualized, studied and discussed prostitution. The chapter begins with a description of the structural and procedural changes that resulted from the 1933 Reorg. Next, it argues that these changes resulted in a reduction of the space and power for women on the Committee. Religious organizations previously given significant respect and responsibility on the Committee were considerably impacted. To demonstrate how discourse and approach changed on the Committee after 1933, the chapter examines a report on the Rehabilitation of Adult Prostitutes published in 1936.[602]

Pivoting, the chapter will outline the bifurcated Imperial Project being undertaken during the same period. It will detail the Second Enquiry, its method and its findings. The chapter will detail how rescue movements were operating in the colonies through a review of an important 1937 Conference in Indonesia. The Imperial Period provides fertile historical soil to explore the myriad of ways that racial hierarchy was not just policed but also constructed by laws on sexuality during the interwar period. By deconstructing the racial assumptions embedded in this regime of sexuality governance, we can begin to understand how racial power is produced and deeply engrained in regimes ostensibly aimed at protecting women from sexual exploitation.

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[599] Halley, Kotiswaran, Shamir, and Thomas, *"From the International to the Local"*.
[600] Halley, Kotiswaran, Shamir, and Thomas, *"From the International to the Local"*.
[601] Second Enquiry.
[602] Second Enquiry.

At the same time, and adding a significant layer of complexity to the Imperial Period, are the corresponding feminist victories in the colonies.[603] While they were operating under an inherently racist and white supremacist set of laws and policies, feminists were simultaneously making significant in-roads into colonial policy and even colonial police forces as a result of their organizing around the issue of sex trafficking.

24 The Reorganization of 1933

In 1932, the Committee appointed a subcommittee to study possible reorganization structures of both the Trafficking Committee and the Child Welfare Committee.[604] The Child Welfare Committee was formed at the suggestion of Grace Abbot, US Representative, during the second session of the Trafficking Committee.[605] The Child Welfare Committee was running into difficulty precisely because the ambit of its mandate was so large. The subcommittee, led by Mr. Harris (UK Representative) published a report in 1933, which was subsequently discussed later that year during the Committees annual meeting (the "Reorg Report" or the "Report").[606]

During the meeting of 1933, the Trafficking Committee met at an unusual joint session with the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children. At this joint session a re-organization of both commissions was discussed with members of both present. Rapporteur Mr. Harris (representative of the United Kingdom) presented the Reorg Report adopted in part by

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[603] This project adopts the definition of "feminist" put forward by Janet Halley in, *Split Decisions,* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006)*,* Part One: Taking a Break from Feminism, Taxonomies and Terms, 17-20. This definition is a three-part test to determine whether a political activity meets the minimalist definition of "feminist" it must meet a tri-partite test. To be "feminist" a position must: make a distinction between male and female; posit some sort of subordination as between male and female and, feminism opposes the subordination of females, and "carries a brief for f" (at 17-18).

[604] See 1932 Minutes.

[605] 1923 Minutes, 13.

[606] 1933 Joint Reorganization Session, 13: "In April 1932, the Commission sitting in joint session of both Committees, considered certain proposals which had been made for altering its constitution and for improving its methods of work, and it decided to appoint a Sub-Committee to examine these proposals. This Sub-Committee, which met at Geneva from January 16-20, 1933, made a report, which is printed as an appendix to the present document."

members of the Committees.[607] It was decided that the Trafficking and Child Welfare Committees would continue to meet separately.[608] It did, however, make some critical changes to the structure and procedure of the Trafficking Committee that resulted in a shift towards medical discourse instead of moralistic and religious themes. As discussed below, these included increasing the number of government representatives, taking aim at religious organizations, and introducing an agenda committee to curtail the issues being discussed at each meeting.

24.1 Structural Changes

There were two major structural changes made to the Committee: government representatives were increased from thirteen to fifteen, and volunteer organizations were put on notice that their time on the Committee was limited.[609] Rapporteur Mr. Harris was hoping to decrease the number of volunteer organizations on the Committee but his bold report was tempered in the final recommendations of the Joint Committee.[610]

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[607] 1933 Joint Reorganization Session, 13.
[608] 1933 Joint Reorganization Session, 13.
[609] 1933 Joint Reorganization Session, 13-14:
"Government Representatives: The Commission examined carefully the observations of the Sub-Committee in paragraphs 7,8, and 9 of its report. It appeared to the Commission that there is a real need for strengthening the official element and for making it more representative. The problem with which the Commission is deal concern the welfare of young people throughout the world, but there are many countries with different social institutions and with different social problems which are not represented on the Commission. As the Sub-Committee points out the official element is at present largely derived from Europe. Wider representation would not only tend to secure the support of a larger international interest and opinion but would place a greater stock of knowledge at the disposal of the Commission.
Assessors: The need for periodic chances which the Commission has accepted in regard to the official element on the Commission applies also to the assessors. With the exception of one or two persons added to the Commission for special reasons, the Assessors are nominated mainly by international associations connected with the problem with which the Commission is dealing, but there are other important international associations also concerned in these problems which are not represented on the Commission and some of these have expressed to the Council a desire to be associated with the work…
After a long discussion, in the course of which most of the speakers expressed the opinion that there was no reason for reducing the number of assessors, the Commission decided, by nine votes and one abstention, to introduce into the report the following passage: "the commission, however, has not accepted the view that the number of assessors should be reduced, as all the associations represented have rendered great services to the Commission. It thinks, however, that any proposal to add to their number would be inopportune".
[610] 1933 Joint Reorganization Session, 13-14.

24.1.1 Government Representatives

The Reorg Report outlined how there is a need for greater representation of government representatives on the Committee. It explains that there are both official (government representatives) and unofficial (volunteer organizations) elements on the Committee. It outlines how there has developed a power imbalance between these official and unofficial elements. The Joint Committee carefully reviewed the Report and concluded that there was a "real need for strengthening the official element".[611]

The Report elaborated that the officials on the Committee need to not only be more powerful but also more representative. The Report detailed that nine of the thirteen countries represented were European. [612] The Joint Meeting agreed that there was a real need for making the Committee more representative and increasing the number of non-European members. Adopting the suggestions of the Report, the Joint Meeting concluded that three additional countries should serve on the Commission for a term of five years.[613] At the end of this five-year term, a Joint Meeting reconsidered the question of making changes in relation to the "whole membership".[614]

24.1.2 Volunteer Organizations

The Report described the "unofficial elements" on the Committee.[615] These are explained as the assessors, or volunteer organizations, that are members in every respect but voting. The Report suggests there was a need for change in representation from time to time and again

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[611] 1933 Joint Reorganization Session, 13-14.
[612] Joint Reorg Report, 20.
[613] Joint Reorg Report, 14.
[614] Joint Reorg Report, 14.
[615] Joint Reorg Report, Appendix 1: Report of the Sub-Committee on the Reorganization of the Commission (January 16-20, 1933), 21.

suggested a five-year term for all existing assessors (a term used synonymously with "volunteer organization"). [616]

The suggestion to reduce the number of assessors was understandably met with considerable discussion and dissent. Unfortunately, the minutes of the Joint Meeting do not outline the details of this discussion nor the positions of those involved in the discussion. They do however note that "most of the speakers expressed the opinion that there was no need for reducing the number of assessors".[617] In the end, the Joint Meeting did not accept the recommendation to reduce the number of assessors and this was decided on a vote of nine and one abstention. That abstention was Mr. Harris, who proceeded to issue a lengthy and passionate reservation.[618] In the end, Mr. Harris was unable to convince the Joint Meeting to reduce the number of assessors. he was able however, to limit the term of current assessors to five years. The Joint Meeting was not prepared to accept a reduction in the number of assessors, but they were also not prepared to add more assessors. The Joint Meeting opined that the same concerns regarding representation of Governments apply to volunteer organizations. Therefore, it landed on the recommendation that "whenever a vacancy occurs, the Committee shall consider whether any changes are desirable in the organizations represented".[619]

The effect of these structural changes was therefore less significant than Mr. Harris would have liked. Indeed, the power wielded by the assessors in this discussion was appreciable. Not only was

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[616] Joint Reorg Report, Appendix 1, 21.
[617] 1933 Joint Reorganization Session, 13-14.
[618] Joint Reorg Report, 21:
The United Kingdom delegation, while expressing its appreciation of the services rendered by the existing assessors, remains strongly of the opinion that it is desirable to affect a reduction in the number of assessors as opportunity offers.
It has seemed to it impossible to defend in principle the retention of so large a body of assessors, especially as in joint sessions… the assessors number 18, thus outnumbering the existing twelve government representatives by fifty percent and the assessors will continue to outnumber them, even if, as proposed, the number is increased to fifteen.
[619] Joint Reorg Report, 21.

the suggestion of reducing their number rejected, the final recommendation also explicitly complimented their hard work in the following way: "The Commission, however, has not accepted the suggestion that the number of assessors should be reduced, as all the associations represented have rendered great services to the Commission."[620]

The question then, is how can the addition of just three government representatives with no change in assessors create the rupture of power relations suggested in this Chapter? The Committee was not operating under a hierarchical power structure where those on top bark orders at those on the bottom. Rather the power that was wielded and distributed on the Committee was diffuse, constantly shifting and changing form. The power structures that resulted on the Committee were created in relations among the members. In this understanding of power relations, a change of membership created a ripple effect in the way that issues were debated and studied on the Committee. The clearest example of this was in who was considered an expert on the issue of rehabilitating adult prostitutes. Before the reorganization, Avril Sainte-Croix was considered the de facto leader on this issue because of the work women's organizations were doing in railway operations and rescue homes. After the reorganization, psychiatrists were considered the expert in this issue, and were called upon to research and report on how to rehabilitate adult prostitutes with a focus on state-run psychiatric institutions rather than rescue homes.

However, an increase in three government representatives was not the only cause of this reduction of space and power for women on the Committee. To understand why this reorganization had such profound effects on the operations of the Committee, we must examine the procedural changes the reorganization instituted. It is in the details of these procedural changes, that we can

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[620] Joint Reorg Report, 21.

begin to see how the Committee shifted from moralistic to medical models for understanding prostitution and the effect this has on its work.

24.2 Procedural Changes

The methods of work developed by the Committee were outlined in the Early Days chapter. A complicated system developed on the Committee where assessors would regularly introduce topics only tangentially related to trafficking. These issues would be discussed, and the Committee would determine whether the issue was related to trafficking, even if only distantly. If it was, then the issue would be placed on the agenda for the following session. It was in this way that the mandate of the Committee continued to expand, and the issues being discussed at each meeting mushroomed. Topics such as dancing troupes, music halls, alcohol, and obscenity all became central issues at Committee meetings, as detailed in the Early Days Chapter.

The procedure that developed on the Committee developed organically, even arbitrarily, with assessors hoping to increase the ambit of the Committee's mandate to include their social issue *du jour*. The Sub-Committee examined these haphazard methods of work developed on the Committee and compared them with procedure developed at the International Labour Organization. "The Sub-Committee received much valuable assistance and information from Mr. Johnston of the International Labour Office, on the procedure adopted by his organization in carrying through its work".[621] Through studying the methods used by the ILO, the Report suggested a complete overhaul of the Committee's procedure.

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[621] Joint Reorg Report, Appendix 1: Report of the Sub-Committee on the Reorganization of the Commission (January 16-20, 1933), 23.

24.2.1 Agenda Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee was unanimously of the opinion that the Committee discussed too many issues at each meeting.[622] It was agreed that it would be preferable to restrict the number of topics discussed at each meeting to one or two. This is a significant reduction in the social issues that could be discussed at each meeting. An agenda subcommittee was recommended to achieve this result. The agenda subcommittee was responsible for reviewing each proposed issue and to determine which issues would be included in the agenda of the upcoming Committee meeting. The Report suggested a non-exhaustive list of the factors that the subcommittee should consider when assessing an issue for placement on the agenda. These were: the importance or urgency of the problem; the scope or international character of the problem; and its constructive value when studied.[623] Unfortunately, no further details were given to this rather vague set of criteria. The Joint Meeting adopted the recommendation for an Agenda Subcommittee without reservation or discussion. The draft rules of procedure being adopted without comment, it appears that the procedural changes were not considered controversial at the time of their approval.

24.2.2 Silencing the Assessors

In addition to the creation of the Agenda Subcommittee, the Report details how various issues should be treated at future meetings.[624] There were two kinds of subjects that came before

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[622] Joint Reorg Report, Appendix 1, 23.

[623] Joint Reorg Report, Appendix 1: Report of the Sub-Committee on the Reorganization of the Commission (January 16-20, 1933), 23 where it explains "The Sub-Committee unanimously felt that there were too many subjects on the Commissions' agenda and that efforts should be made to reduce the number of questions to be actively discussed to no more than one or two for each session. To ensure this limitation, the Agenda Sub-Committee should have sufficient time before and after and if necessary, between, the sessions to consider and plan each agenda Every Questions proposed should be submitted to the Agenda Sub-Committee, which should assign it a place on a list of subjects arranged in order of importance. To establish priority of place, each question should be considered in relation to the importance or urgency of the problem, the scope or international character of the subject, its constructive value when studied, etc. Having considered and classified to subjects, the Agenda Sub-Committee would report its findings to the Commission".

[624] Joint Reorg Report, Appendix 1: Report of the Sub-Committee on the Reorganization of the Commission (January 16-20, 1933), 23 where it explains "(2) Treatment of Questions- The Sub-Committee found that the

the Committee: permanent and non-permanent subjects. The permanent subjects included annual reports from governments, non-governmental organizations and liaison offices.[625] The Report explains, "these questions are mainly of a documentary nature and should not require verbal exposition".[626] This was a dramatically different policy for how assessors were able to participate in the meetings. Previously, as discussed in the Early Days Chapter, the assessors wielded significant power on the Committee. Taking entire sessions to discuss their annual reports, these women took every opportunity that the international policy making stage offered to advance their social morality agendas.

The time allotted each assessor to discuss their reports every session was their time to shine. They would direct the attention to the work of their local organizations and would steer the agenda by introducing other social issues they believed should be dealt with by the Committee. In this way, the women involved in the rescue movement used their position on the Committee to essentially attain a leadership role by 1927. The Reorg Report took this stage away from the volunteer organizations. As a result, they were much less able to direct and influence the discussion and research being undertaken by the Committee after the Reorg.

The Joint Meeting also adopted the suggested procedure for the treatment of non-permanent subjects that did make it onto the agenda.[627] First, the subject was to be discussed by the Committee and "this discussion will deal with the suitability of the subject, its scope, aspects

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subjects coming before the Commission are of two kinds: (a) permanent, such as the annual reports to the Traffic in Women and Children Committee from Governments, from Liaison officers and from voluntary organizations. These questions are mainly of a documentary character and should not require verbal exposition, but should rather promote interesting comment, raise questions for elucidation, or suggest further lines of study. (b) Non-permanent, such as special studies either carried out by the Commission or furnished by other organizations on the initiative of the Commission. Such subjects also include resolutions by the Assembly giving directions and suggestions for special study.

[625] Joint Reorg Report, Appendix 1, 23.
[626] Joint Reorg Report, Appendix 1, 23.
[627] Joint Reorg Report, 24.

of special interest and the object in view: for instance whether it is desired to prepare an international convention, to make a comparative study of law and practice, or to conduct future research".[628] Once the nature of the study was decided, the Committee would direct the Secretariat to either issue a report or conduct government questionnaires. The Committee or Subcommittee would correspond with the Secretariat and only once a final draft was decided upon would the report or questionnaire be printed.[629]

The stated objective of these recommendations was to "ensure full and systematic treatment" of the subjects.[630] This too was a dramatic change from the colourful debates that would often stray from one social issue to another during the Early Days. Systematic processes were aimed at ensuring that the few issues that were discussed on the Committee were not being co-opted as segues to other social issues such as alcoholism or dancing halls. All members of the Committee were restricted in how they were able to debate and discuss issues on the agenda.

Further, in the Early Days, it was very common for one of the Committee Members, including the assessors, to act as rapporteurs and form a subcommittee to study the social issue of personal interest to them. This was one of the key methods of work that allowed the Committee to deal with such a huge variety of social issues. However, after the Reorg, this method of work was severely curtailed. While the Rules of Procedure still technically permitted members of the Committee to conduct research studies, the Report prioritized research work done by the Secretariat.[631] It specifically directed the Committee to "ask the Secretariat, depending on the nature of the question, either to prepare a Report of the material available on the subject and plan

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[628] Joint Reorg Report, 24.
[629] Joint Reorg Report, 24.
[630] Joint Reorg Report, 24.
[631] Joint Reorg Report, 24.

a study or draft a questionnaire for governments".[632] It was the Secretariat and outside experts who would now be responsible for future research studies.

25 Reduction of Space and Power for Women

By 1933, the women on the Committee had not managed to abolish licensed houses throughout Europe and their colonies, but they had developed a "mature engagement with power"; they were by no means "helpless outsiders".[633] Instead, they developed a complex set of strategies that allowed them to "piggyback on existing forms of power, intervening in them and participating in them in many, simultaneous, often conflicting, and highly mobile ways".[634] The legal environment during the interwar period was the first systematic experiment in international social policy making. The new international system (created in part with the establishment of the League of Nations and International Labour Organization) offered a "novel and very hospitable" policy making environment for these early feminists. In the context of this new international order, the women did not "seek a monopoly of these forms, but rather a plentiful presence within them".[635]

Therefore, the Reorg of 1933 was significant because it altered the relationships and networks that had developed on the Committee in the past ten years. The Reorg's procedural changes had severely curtailed the presence of the assessors (which was another term used for volunteer organizations in the archives) on the Committee. Essentially the changes in procedure took away the annual stage each assessor had to discuss the issues of importance to them. They went from having a "plentiful presence" on the Committee to being not only silenced but also put on notice that their time was limited. These changes, along with the addition of three government representatives, resulted in a change of personnel, the displacement of volunteers for professionals,

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[632] Joint Reorg Report, 24.
[633] Halley, Kotiswaran, Shamir, Thomas, *"From the International to the Local,"* 314.
[634] Halley, Kotiswaran, Shamir, Thomas, *"From the International to the Local,"* 314.
[635] Halley, Kotiswaran, Shamir, Thomas, *"From the International to the Local,"* 314.

leading to a concomitant reduction in the space and power of women. The Committee had become much less hospitable for the rescue movement, partly as a result of macroeconomic changes and partly as a result of organizational and procedural changes.

While the addition of three new government representatives was not the most significant change to result from the Reorg, its importance should not be underestimated either. As the previous chapters have outlined , the women on the Committee were engaged in very complex and often veiled debates during the meetings. The social dynamics that developed between the Committee members had created a complex system that resulted in highly mobilized campaigns against vice during the Glory Years. The Committee, led by the women assessors, were making great strides in abolishing licensed houses on the local level, increasing numbers of women police, and establishing an important presence in station work and rehabilitation work at Magdalene Asylums and other rescue homes.

The volunteer organizations on the Committee had ties to rescue homes. For example, the Federation for the National Unions for the Protection of Girls had 518 homes and accommodated 270,000 girls annually before World War One.[636] In 1922 the Jewish Association had six homes in the London area and the International Catholic Association had a separate branch dedicated to rescue homes.[637] The rescue industry had developed largely in the para-state institutional form of religious organizations. Affiliation with the League had given a disperse network of missions and rescue homes favourable treatment under international law. The assessors having key roles in the development of international trafficking policy made many of the successes during the Glory Years

[636] Figure 3 explains the operations of the Federation of National Unions for the Protection of Girls as it was explained in the 1922 Minutes.

[637] Figures 4 and 5 explain the operations of the Jewish Associations and International Catholic Association as it was explained in the 1922 Minutes.

possible. Without having a vote on the Committee, this policy direction required deft political maneuvering. In this context, a mere two additional government representatives still had a profound (albeit gradual) effect on the power and space women had on the Committee.

The members of the Committee had remained constant in the first ten years of its tenure. This allowed for the development of a set of unspoken rules among each other, ways of discussing controversial topics, and ways of seeing past apparent differences. This social order among the Committee members was complicated and required an in-depth understanding of the interpersonal relations of the individuals at the meetings. The arrival of three new government representatives had the effect of completely changing the dynamic of the group and the social power balance that existed previously shifted.

The sudden arrival of government representatives for Chile, India and Turkey in 1934 shifted the power relations on the Committee.[638] Perhaps the clearest portrayal of this reduced influence is in the League's study into the rehabilitation of adult prostitutes, discussed below.[639] The development of this research, who did the research and how it was done, all reveal how the Committee moved towards a psychiatric model (rather than a religious one) for understanding prostitution.

26 Shifting Discourse: The Rise of the Psychiatric Model

By 1936, the Committee had adopted a new way of discussing, studying and conceptualizing prostitution; the medical model had firmly rooted itself as the primary way of speaking about and studying prostitution.[640] Religious women were no longer the experts on

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[638] 1934 Minutes, 3.
[639] 1936 Minutes, Report on Adult Prostitutes,.
[640] 1934 Minutes, 5, "The Committee had before it a report in four parts, as well as an addendum, submitted by the Rapporteur, Mr. S Cohen Secretary-General of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls, Women, and Children. This report represented the second stage of the enquiry into measures of rehabilitation undertake by the Traffic in Women and Children Committee with the approval of the Council and the Assembly for the League of

rehabilitation, psychiatrists were. Vice was conceptualized less as an airborne virus likely to infect innocent youngsters and more as an inherent psychiatric deviance. By 1936, prostitutes were being studied by psychiatrists and the focus was no longer on their moral deficiencies but rather their mental deficiencies. Magdalene Asylums were no longer the model of rehabilitation, mental institutions became the place where women were sent after being arrested for immorality and where over half of prostitutes were found to be "mentally deficient" or "feeble minded".[641]

26.1 Enter the "Mentally Defective" Prostitute

In order to understand how the medical model replaced the religious one for conceptualizing prostitution on the Committee, we need to trace the development of this discourse in the meetings. In 1933 during the Joint Meeting, the members of both the Trafficking and Child Welfare Committee discussed three issues: The Reorg (discussed above); publicity of Committee's material; and a preliminary discussion of the Far East Report.[642]

The Committee emphasized the need for the rehabilitation of inmates of brothels that were shut down. Specifically, the Licensed Houses Report noted that:

> Many of the inmates of brothels are known to be mentally defective or otherwise abnormal. For these women, mental observation by medical specialists and accommodation suitable to their needs should be provided.[643]

Nations. The purpose of this second stage was of limited nature and referred to rehabilitation of adult prostitutes. The general outline and tenor of the report was approved.
The Committee discussed fully the problems raised by the information contained in this report, and had the invaluable assistance of two experts- Dr. Cavaillon Secretary-General of the "Union internaionale contre le peril venerien", Paris, and Dr. Kemp, of the University Institute, Copenhagen,"

[641] 1934 Minutes, 6.
[642] 1933 Minutes.
[643] 1934 Minutes, 11.

The Committee decided that there was valuable information available on current rehabilitation methods used by both volunteer organizations and governments.[644] The Secretariat was directed to conduct a study on the rehabilitation of prostitutes, focusing on the mental health facilities available for the so-called "mentally defective".[645] Both volunteer organizations and governments were to be canvassed. This is the first time that mental health was directly studied by the Committee in relation to the rehabilitation of prostitutes.[646] Prior to this Licensed Houses Report, the focus was on moral rehabilitation and venereal disease. Now, the Committee has commissioned a study specifically on the facilities and services available for "mentally defective and otherwise abnormal" prostitutes.[647] This was the first critical but subtle shift towards a psychological model for understanding prostitution.

The prior studies undertaken by the Committee on rehabilitation had not examined state mental institutions, nor had they focused on the rehabilitation from a psychiatric perspective. Rather, the previous rehabilitation studies had been undertaken by women representing religious organizations. Hostels and Magdalene Asylums were the subject of enquiry and state-run institutions received much less attention. In 1935, the enquiry's progress was discussed.[648] The 1935 Minutes state that during the previous session, Mr. S. Cohen, Assessor representing the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls, Women and Children, was appointed Rapporteur.[649] Interestingly, the 1934 Minutes do not speak to this appointment, rather they only direct the Secretariat to conduct a study. Regardless, Mr. Cohen was put in charge of the enquiry into rehabilitation of prostitutes.

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[644] 1934 Minutes, 11.
[645] 1934 Minutes, 11.
[646] 1934 Minutes, 11.
[647] 1934 Minutes, 11.
[648] 1935 Minutes, 38.
[649] 1935 Minutes, 38.

This led to the collaboration of two psychiatrists who were considered experts in the mental state of prostitutes.[650] As discussed below, these psychiatrists replaced the religious women on the Committee as experts in rehabilitation during the 1936 discussion. This focus on the mental health aspects of prostitution had the effect of further disempowering the rescue movement because they were no longer the resident experts on rehabilitation. Beginning in 1934 with the directive to focus on mentally defective prostitutes, it continued in 1935 with renewed focus. Three other less obvious changes in 1935 also resulted in the rescue movement losing influence on the Committee.

First, Mr. Cohen was appointed Rapporteur for the enquiry, not Avril Sainte-Croix. In the previous studies on rehabilitation, the missions and hostels were the subject of enquiry rather than state-run services. This is largely because the person who was generally in charge of studying rehabilitation before 1934 was Avril Sainte-Croix.[651] As noted by other authors, Sainte-Croix had developed a highly effective system of communication with missions around the world via questionnaires.[652] Using her invaluable connections and tenacity, she had carved out a role for herself on the Committee as the expert on rehabilitation. It is therefore surprising that Mr. Cohen was chosen as Rapporteur and it is unfortunate the Minutes provide such little information about his appointment.

Mr. Cohen approached the entire issue of rehabilitation of prostitutes differently than the rescue movement. His approach was less evangelical and did not adhere to the value of penance the same way the religious women on the Committee did. He also did not have the personal connections to missions and his focus was instead on the state facilities that were available.[653]

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[650] 1935 Minutes, 38.
[651] 1929 Minutes, 26.
[652] Karen Offen, "Intrepid Crusader: Ghenia Avril de Sainte-Croix Takes on the Prostitution Issue", *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 33, (2005), 352.
[653] 1935 Minutes, 39.

The Committee decided that prevention was too broad a subject to address.[654] Typically, before this enquiry, Sainte-Croix would canvass her organizations for information on both rehabilitation and prevention. In the milieu of the female penitentiary system run by religious organizations during the period, prevention and rehabilitation methods of women were the same: institutionalization and hard labour. Therefore, the enquiry was restricted from examining prevention methods and was explicitly focused on available state facilities. This further disempowered the Magdalene Asylums and rescue organizations that had previously been given greater attention by the Committee.

26.2 Psychiatrists Take Centre Stage: 1936 Report on Rehabilitation of Adult Prostitutes

Two psychiatrists were contracted by Mr. Cohen to write a report on the rehabilitation of adult prostitutes, Dr. Kemp from Copenhagen and Dr. Cavillon from Paris. These two psychiatrists conducted a large study of women arrested for prostitution and examined their mental health. Dr. Kemp was a psychiatrist with the University of Copenhagen and was deeply involved in the carrying out the enquiry into rehabilitation. Likewise, Dr. Cavaillon was a psychiatrist who offered his opinions on the mental state of prostitutes during the 1936 Meeting. Dr. Cavaillon was the Secretary-General of the "union international contra le peril venerien", an anti-venereal disease organization in Paris, France. The focus of the discussion was on the mental health assessments undertaken by Dr. Kemp on 530 prostitutes.[655] His conclusions are shocking and reproduced below.[656] These excerpts are the only direct quotes from the Report included in the 1936 Minutes.

> A large number of the women […] examined were found to be mentally abnormal. The intelligence of about half of them was below normal.

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[654] 1935 Minutes, 39.
[655] 1935 Minutes, 39.
[656] 1935 Minutes, 39.

> Many were greatly retarded- that is to say, dullards- but a comparatively small number, actually not more than seven or eight percent were down-right feeble-minded.
>
> About a quarter were pronounced psychopaths and eight per cent had other mental diseases. A number of the psychopaths also had markedly reduced intelligence and were especially characterized by weakness of character, lack of mental balance, impulsiveness, asociality, abnormality, strong instincts and lack of feeling. Less than a third were mentally normal and without defective intelligence.[657]

Dr. Kemp noted that most of the time there was no psychiatric examination and that if there were more examinations "a greater amount of mental inferiority might have been found".[658] He suggested there needed to be further study of the mental state of prostitutes, psychiatric guidance and assessment should be easily accessible. Dr. Kemp also suggested in his report to the Committee there should be "extensive use of legal psychiatric examination of prostitutes".[659] Finally, Dr. Kemp suggested that there must be available "social measures suited to the care and supervision of mentally unstable and abnormal children and adults".[660]

By the "legal psychiatric examination of prostitutes", Dr. Kemp was referring to a specific practice of assessing every woman and girl who was arrested for prostitution or rescued from a brothel.[661] This method would open the pool of possible psychiatric patients considerably because it would require every woman who came into contact with the state as a result of sex work to be assessed by a psychiatrist. Essentially Dr. Kemp was suggesting that doctors rather than rescue

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[657] 1936 Minutes, 6.
[658] 1936 Minutes, 7.
[659] 1936 Minutes, 7.
[660] 1936 Minutes, 7.
[661] 1936 Minutes, 7.

workers or police should be the ones to determine where rescued prostitutes should be sent. As discussed in the Glory Years chapter, before the rise of the medical model on the Committee, rescue workers were the ones responsible for determining where prostitutes should be sent. This "morality triage" resulted in many women being admitted against their wills to Magdalene Asylums and other rescue institutions. Dr. Kemp sought to change this method of rescue work and, based on his assessment of the mental state of prostitutes detailed below, it is likely that at least half would be sent to a mental institution for treatment.

After hearing from these two doctors, the Committee agreed that the work on this part of the study should be continued.[662] There was further information of roughly 2,500 cases from twenty countries and the Committee authorized the doctors to use this information to continue its study on the mental state of prostitutes.[663]

Unfortunately, the fifteenth session of the Committee held from April 20th to 27th, 1936 was its final meeting and many questions about the Committee's activity are left unanswered as a result. Council of the League of Nations had ordered a restructuring of the Social Section, which resulted in the Committee being shut down and a consolidated "Social Questions Committee" was established in its place. [664] While the Committee urged for the inclusion of volunteer organizations on this new Social Questions Committee, they were not expected to be included in the newly formed body. The final Report on the Work of its Fifteenth Session sets out the final matters the Committee wished to communicate to the Council. The Committee urged Council to heed the recommendations of the rehabilitation study, described above. The final recommendations of the Committee detail this report and its findings, urging Council to take action on its

[662] 1936 Minutes, 7.
[663] 1936 Minutes, 7.
[664] 1936 Minutes, 7.

recommendations. In addition to the rehabilitation report, the final recommendations highlight the *Draft Protocol Against Souteneurs*, discussed in the Glory Years Chapter. This Draft Protocol was the focus of the Committee's work from 1932 to 1936, and they wished to highlight it as an important legacy to bring forward into the newly structured committee.

Lastly, the Final Report to Council alerted them to the upcoming "Conference of Central Authorities of countries in the Middle and Far East" on the subject of sex trafficking (discussed below). A conference had been planned in Indonesia for the following year, 1937. While the Committee was being dissolved, the work being done in the colonies continued. The publication of the Second Enquiry in 1932, marked a period of increased attention to Imperial rescue operations in the colonies. This is what I understand as the Rescue Missions' Imperial Project. The Reorg had a fascinating unintended consequence for the rescue movement in the colonies. While the imperial rescue operations were being discussed less in Geneva, they were still mushrooming in much the same way home operations did in Europe after the publication of the First Enquiry in 1926.

While policy was shifting on the Committee in terms of understanding prostitution as a medical issue rather than a moral one in Europe, this shift was not also happening in the imperial campaigns. As a result, there is a bifurcation in sex policy divided between European countries and their colonies. At "home" prostitution was increasingly a medical and particularly a psychological issue. Meanwhile, during the same period in the colonies, the rescue ideology described in the Introduction and Early Days Chapter continued to underpin the blossoming colonial rescue operations. The next section pivots somewhat in order to explain this bifurcation of sex policy and goes into detail on how rescue ideology and techniques continued in the Imperial Project unquestioned.

27 Bifurcation of Sex Policy: The Imperial Rescue Project

In a roundabout way, the reorganization that was aimed at curtailing the power of women on the Committee, had the opposite effect. It is true, as discussed above, that the Reorg changed the rules of procedure so that women were less able to contribute on the Committee.[665] This over time led to a shift in discourse from the moral model to the psychiatric one for understanding prostitution in Europe. However, the Reorg had unintended consequences for the Imperial Project.

While the women's movement, including Avril Sainte-Croix, were basically being demoted on the Committee during 1933, they had already put in motion a study on the "Far East" that resulted in the Second Enquiry.[666] The unintended consequence of limiting the agenda in Geneva was that the women's movement's understanding remained official policy in the "Far East" into 1937, while other psychiatric models were being embraced for Europe.[667] Paradoxically, the reorganization that was intended to curtail the women's power hold in Geneva, created fertile conditions for a women's movement in the colonies.

The rescue missions in the colonies followed a similar developmental trajectory as the rescue missions in Europe. The early colonial rescue missions adopted a policy primarily aimed at changing criminal laws to prohibit legal brothels, or licensed houses as they were called, and rescuing women. This is similar to the early rescue movement in Europe before the outbreak of WWI. This approach was coined the "Anglo-Saxon" approach to sex trafficking at the 1937 Conference for the Far East. It was the same approach adopted by abolitionists in Geneva before the policy change in 1927, discussed in the Early Days Chapter. The focus was on closing brothels by changing criminal laws and enforcing those existing criminal laws strictly.

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[665] See 1933 Joint Reorg Session.
[666] See the Second Enquiry.
[667] See 1932 Minutes; 1933 Joint Reorg Session; Minutes of the 1934 Session; Minutes of the 1934 Session; and Report of the 1937 Meeting.

The Second Enquiry published in 1932, adopted this approach throughout its analysis. Ideologically, in the 1930s, abolitionists believed that licensed houses must be abolished with criminal laws banning commercial sex, brothels, bawdyhouses and other immoral establishments. The focus of activities was centered on pressuring local government officials to enforce laws on morality and enact new ones when existing laws were not broad or punitive enough.

The Second Enquiry had the effect of rousing public interest on the topic, and encouraging many of the mission operations to increase their presence in the colonies.[668] In the same way that women's missions began to mushroom around Europe after the publication of the First Enquiry, white Christian women began organizing in the colonies after the 1932 publication of the Second Enquiry.[669] This blossoming Imperial Rescue Project adopted many of the ideological tenets of the Geneva Group and the rescue movement in Europe. However, it developed its own imperial iteration of rescue ideology as a result of the vastly different cultural and legal landscapes that these missionaries were working in.

The countries considered as part of the "Far East" included China, Japan, India, the Philippines, Indonesia, and all the colonies in the South Pacific and South East Asia during the 1930s. The colonial holdings in North America were considered during the First Enquiry and so this enquiry was focused on East Asia and the Indian subcontinent.

In Geneva, however, the Second Enquiry did not garner much attention. Satisfied with the conclusion that there was no need to fear a revival of the white slavery scare, the Committee in Geneva focused on organizing a conference in the "Far East". In the five years between the publication of the Second Enquiry and the 1937 Conference, the only substantive issue discussed

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[668] League of Nations, Traffic in Women and Children, Conference of Central Authorities in Eastern Countries Report, C.228.M.164.1937.IV.(Series of League of Nations Publications IV Social, 1937 IV.4), League of Nations Archive, Geneva Switzerland, ("Far East Conference"), see introductory remarks.
[669] Far East Conference, Introductory Remarks.

in Geneva was Russian women working in Harbin China.[670] This five-year gap resulted in all the conclusions and recommendations of the Second Enquiry remaining untouched by the ideological debates in Geneva regarding the psychological or moral model for understanding prostitution.[671] None of the Geneva committee members attended the 1937 Conference.[672] All the sixty-two delegates were unfamiliar with any of the power dynamics or debates that were occurring in Geneva.[673]

At the 1937 Far East Conference, the Imperial Rescue Project developed in a similar way as the European Rescue Project did in Geneva after the publication of the First Enquiry. In almost the exact same manner as M. Bourgois convinced the Geneva Group to adopt a more gradual approach to the eradication of prostitution and vice, the French representative in Indonesia made the same policy shift for the Far East in 1937. The Far East Conference participants agreed to adopt a policy that tended to make prostitution gradually disappear with a renewed focus on public opinion rather than government action. This shift was very similar to the Geneva Group's ideological shift in 1927, detailed in the Glory Years Chapter.

The report of the 1937 Conference, along with volunteer organization reports during the period between 1932 and 1937, indicate there was a growing rescue movement in the colonies. However, it was still in its early stages of development. The rescue operations were expanding, with more volunteers and the opening of more rescue homes. The main recommendation from the 1937 Far East Conference was for the League to open an office in the Far East. The conference participants realized the value of a Secretariat who could act as a hub of information and communication. The Imperial Rescue Project was growing but still in early stages of development

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[670] Far East Conference, Introductory Remarks.
[671] Report of the 1937 Far East Conference, 1.
[672] Report of the 1937 Far East Conference, 1.
[673] Report of the 1937 Far East Conference, 1.

in 1937. However, the Imperial Rescue Project rather than continue on to be wildly successful, as happened in the Glory Years in Europe, was interrupted by the dissolution of the Committee in 1938 and the subsequent outbreak of war.

27.1 The Second Enquiry, Overview

The report was divided into two parts.[674] The first part examined the extent of the traffic in Asia according to two groups: white women and other women. The second part of the report was essentially a summary of the country information submitted to the Travelling Commission, providing more detailed information on each country's laws. Written by one of the three members of the Travelling Commission, Mr. Pindor, an Austrian and Polish diplomat who had spent the bulk of his career in China.[675] While the report claims to be based only on objective facts obtained by the enquiry, the personal experience of Mr. Pindor in Harbin clearly influenced the content and conclusions of the Second Enquiry. These personal connections and their influence on the enquiry's conclusions are discussed further below.

White women were considered the most important category of victims that needed to be studied in the colonies. The General Remarks, providing essentially an executive summary of the Second Enquiry, stated that: "there is a certain movement of occidental prostitutes to the Orient, while hardly any oriental women are known to go for purposes of prostitution to the Occident".[676] Of the white women who came from Europe and America for prostitution, "the demand for these women in different Asiatic countries is decreasing, and, provided efforts to check traffic are maintained, there is *no need to fear a revival of the conditions of twenty or thirty years ago*".[677] The report described this period as a time when "considerable numbers of Occidental prostitutes,

[674] See the Second Enquiry, Table of Contents, 7.
[675] See the Second Enquiry, Table of Contents, 7.
[676] See the Second Enquiry, 21.
[677] See the Second Enquiry, 21 (emphasis added).

beginning with the countries nearer to their homes, went farther and farther afield in the Orient in the various stages of their search for new opportunities to exercise their profession".[678]

This period referred to by the Report is what is known as the so-called "white slavery" scare, described in the Introduction. The Second Enquiry concluded that there is no need to fear a revival of the white slave trade. This is one of the most significant aspects of the Second Enquiry. This conclusion shifted the focus of attention away from white women as victims, towards white women as the possible saviours of all the other women being victimized in the colonies.

Upon slight reflection, it is obvious that the ultimate initial purpose of the Second Enquiry was to determine whether there was another "white slavery scare" in the colonies. When the travelling commission determined that there was no need to fear a revival of the white slavery scare, they went on to detail the sex trafficking industry in the countries they visited. The results of this Second Enquiry are noteworthy for several reasons. First, the report outlines an ethnically differentiated business in the colonies. For the authors of the report who found miscegenation to be morally repugnant, this ethnic differentiation was met with support. The international attention in the Far East was nonetheless skewed towards white Russian women in China. The results of the Second Enquiry were at once less moralizing and more sociologically informed than the discussions relating to Europe in the First Enquiry. Poverty, social demographics and gender relations in which women were deeply devalued were all taken seriously in the Second Enquiry. This insight was entirely missing in the discussion about Europe, where the focus was on the moral character of women. And yet, gender relations that devalued women were still a critical aspect of why many women in Europe found themselves in the predicaments of trafficked women. In describing these societies in the colonies that they found barbaric, the Commission actually

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[678] See the Second Enquiry, 21.

produced a more nuanced depiction of the sex industry than was present in the analysis of Europe. Gender devaluation and economic need were surely also aspects of European sex work that ironically the Commission was unable to see in their own backyard. In the analysis of the causes of European sex work in the First Enquiry alcohol, vice districts and a weakening moral fibre are found most important. In contrast, what are understood today as the root causes of trafficking (gender inequality and poverty) are central to the analysis in the Second Enquiry, providing an ironically more nuanced understanding of the causes of sex work.

27.2 Summary of Findings of Asian Prostitutes

The Second Enquiry found that the bulk of the traffic in the colonies was in "Asiatic women from one country of Asia to another".[679] It explained the "largest group of victims of this kind of traffic is composed of women of Chinese race; the next in numerical importance are women of Japanese nationality- that is, Japanese, Koreans and Formosans- followed in much smaller numbers by Malay, Annamite, Siamese, Filipino, Indian, Iraqi, Persians and Syrians".[680]

The Second Enquiry found that prostitution in the Far East was distinct from Europe and the Mediterranean Near East, because it was "characterized by the fact that "prostitutes going to foreign countries do so exclusively in search of clients among their own countrymen abroad."[681] Prostitutes of Chinese race were found in greater or lesser numbers in all territories of the Far East,

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[679] The Second Enquiry, 21.
[680] The Second Enquiry, 21.
[681] Explaining their findings, the Second Enquiry details:
Prostitutes from China follow Chinese to the large entrees of immigration in the south Seas and, as a rule, do not accept clients of other races. Japanese prostitutes are today to be found outside their country in appreciable numbers only in those parts of China where there are considerable colonies of Japanese, and these have relations only with Japanese. Malay women from the Netherlands Indies are taken to British Malaya to be offered to men of their own race, and more often than not they even follow groups of labourers from their own particular island who are engaged on plantations of the neighbouring peninsula; Tamil prostitutes from South India try to go to British Malaya to join groups of Tamil labourers from their own districts; Persian prostitutes in Iraq find their clients among Persian pilgrims

and the Middle East as well as British India.[682] Persons engaged in the traffic of women and children of Chinese race were, as a rule, middle-aged women.[683] The Second Enquiry found that that these women were able to acquire guardianship of a girl with the intention of placing her in domestic service or of exploiting her as a singing-girl or prostitute.[684] Likewise in Formosa, the Second Enquiry found that 78% of prostitutes were the adopted daughters of brothel owners.[685]

The discussion of Japanese victims included persons of Japanese race, under "Koreans", "Formosans" persons of the Chinese race who, as inhabitants of Formosa, were Japanese nationals.[686]

Korean prostitutes were found outside of the Japanese Empire only in a few places in China. The Second Enquiry observes that "they do not seem to observe the racial reserve practiced in these places by Japanese prostitutes and do cater for clients of all nationalities". In describing Formosan prostitutes abroad, the Second Enquiry detailed that they were practically limited to one place, that was the port of Amoy in South China, though there were "a few in Shanghai and possibly some in the Philippines".[687] The Second Enquiry detailed that "they are all of Chinese race, and their clients seem to be chiefly Chinese, whether Chinese citizens or Formosans".[688]

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[682] The Second Enquiry, 21.
[683] The Second Enquiry, 21.
[684] The Second Enquiry, 59.
[685] The Second Enquiry, 75.
[686] The Second Enquiry, 68: "For the reader who is not familiar with ethnographic conditions of the Japanese Empire, it should be mentioned that under "Japanese" are to be understood persons of Japanese race, under "Koreans", "Formosans" persons of the Chinese race who, as inhabitants of Formosa, are Japanese nationals". In describing the traffic of Japanese victims, the Second Enquiry explains:
A glance at the numbers of Japanese prostitutes, and also of the difference categories of Japanese professional prostitutes, and also of the different categories of entertainers, shows that the greatest numbers are to be found in those places outside the Japanese Empire where considerable groups of Japanese are established. It would, therefore, seem probable that not only geishas and waitresses, but also prostitutes who leave Japan for these places abroad do so chiefly to satisfy a demand amongst their own countrymen.

[687] The Second Enquiry, 68.
[688] The Second Enquiry, 68.

No trace of the presence of Filipino prostitutes was found by the Commission outside the Philippine Islands, "a certain number of professional entertainers of that race- dancers- appear to be engaged for the " season" by dancing establishments in Cefoo in China, the summer station of the American naval units which in winter have their base in Manila".[689] Annamite prostitutes were found by the Commission outside Indo-China only in one case- three Annamite prostitutes in Bangkok.[690] Siamese prostitutes were found by the Commission "plying their trade in several cities of British Malaya. There had been in Singapore nine brothels with Siamese prostitutes prior to the general closing of brothels in the colony in 1930. Many of the inmates of these places have continued to carry on prostitution clandestinely".[691]

Outside India, the Commission found Indian prostitutes only in one of the territories visited- namely British Malaya. "And even there the numbers were so small that it may fairly be stated that, generally speaking, Indian women are not victims of international traffic. Those few prostitutes of Indian origin who are Malay have reached there in the current of the existing considerable Indian emigration to that country. The emigrants are South Indians from the Madras Presidency, mostly known as Tamils, who go to Malay for labour on plantations, chiefly rubber plantations".[692]

27.3 Dancing Girls

The Interwar Rescue Movement was particularly interested in policing what they called "travelling troupes of entertainers" and "dancing girls". The Imperial Rescue Project adopted this focus on dancing girls in the colonies. For example, a great deal of attention was given in the Second Enquiry to the issue of Russian women in dancing halls in Shanghai. With respect to

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[689] The Second Enquiry, 78.
[690] The Second Enquiry, 79.
[691] The Second Enquiry, 79.
[692] The Second Enquiry, 82.

professional dancing partners, it appears that Mr. Pindor's time as a diplomat in Shanghai had introduced him to this recent phenomenon of Russian dancing girls among the European and American elites.[693] According to the in-depth description by Mr. Pindor, the Europeans and Americans living in large centres in China, such as Shanghai, had imported a culture of *cabarets*, which employed almost entirely Russian women.[694] The description of *cabaret* culture provided with respect to Shanghai is remarkably similar to descriptions of "artistes and dancing girls" provided in the First Enquiry.

This information regarding the underground culture of dancing halls among the American and European presence in China is a fascinating look into the complex culture in cities like Shanghai during the 1930s. Likewise, the Second Enquiry included a category of "dancing girl" or its cultural equivalent in its discussion of Chinese, Japanese and Filipino women. The Second Enquiry reported that there were Chinese singing girls, "that is, the professional entertainers of the geisha type".[695] The Report notes that "while Certain of these entertainers are bona-fide artistes, there are some who sooner or later are destined to enter into prostitution".[696]

In a similar way, the Second Enquiry found that Filipino women were employed as professional entertainers, dancers. These women were "engaged for the "season" by dancing establishments in Cefoo in China, the summer station of the American naval units which have their base in Manila[697].

This focus on dancing girls and travelling troupes was carried through to the 1937 Far East Conference. During the discussions at the Conference, the Siamese delegate "drew the attention

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[693] The Second Enquiry, 82.
[694] The Second Enquiry, 82.
[695] The Second Enquiry, 37.
[696] The Second Enquiry, 37.
[697] The Second Enquiry, 78.

of the Conference to a type of entertainment troupes, travelling from town to town and from country to country, which caused certain difficulties to the authorities. The delegate of the Straits Settlements further explained that these troupes of boy actors came from hinterland of Swatow and were known in Malaya as Tiochir troupes".[698] The Conference recommended that "special measures should be taken by governments both by control at frontiers and by supervision within their territories to provide for the protection against traffickers of women and children who belonged to or accompanied travelling troupes of entertainers".[699]

27.3.1 Differences in Colonial Religious and Cultural Practices

The goal of the Imperial Rescue Project was to instill a particular western sexual morality onto all the people who lived in the so called "Far East". Rescue operations from Europe had moved to the "Far East" and essentially imposed their model of rescue work onto cities like Calcutta and places like Hong Kong.[700] The ultimate goal was sexual moral conformity with their particular Western standards, and early on these rescue workers recognized that there were cultural and religious practices that would make rescue work more challenging in the "Far East". In describing these differences, the Second Enquiry stated:

> One important point, however, prostitution in the East is quite different from that in Europe and America. In vast territories, it is the consequence of social habits rather than of individual failings, and for whole groups of women it is inevitable outcome of circumstances. Certain recent studies of the antecedents of prostitutes have shown that social customs in Europe are contributory rather than determining factors.

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[698] The Second Enquiry, 41.
[699] The Second Enquiry, 42.
[700] The Second Enquiry, 42.

> Thus, for whole groups of prostitutes in the East, personal responsibility on the part of the victim is to a large extent practically non-existent, and circumstances over which she has no control force her into prostitution quite independently of her own disposition. Hence it is evident that a greater share of responsibility falls upon society, which must employ different measures to deal with prostitution in the East from those employed in other parts of the world. In Europe and America, prostitution, though a definite social phenomenon, is not a group phenomenon. But this is the case in parts of the East, and it is therefore essential that the exponents of society- the authorities- should play a far more important role in dealing with this problem than is the case in other parts of the world.[701]

The Second Enquiry gave several examples of these religious and cultural practices and wanted authorities to take a leading role in shutting them down. Reports from Orissa found that prostitutes were generally from families who have adopted the profession of prostitution for generations.[702] Likewise a report from Bengal stated that girls widowed at a young age were a category that often ended up in prostitution because of the cultural ill treatment of widows.[703]

Besides generational and religious groups practicing prostitution in parts of India, the Second Enquiry also found that women entered into prostitution in the Far East generally for "unselfish motives".[704]

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[701] The Second Enquiry, 8-10.
[702] The Second Enquiry, 8.
[703] Similarly, the delegate of Portuguese India at the Conference gave the following account:
Apart from the general causes of prostitution in Portuguese India, there was a cause of religious origin in that country- namely, Devadassism- which was a social, semi-ritual and semi-traditional institution compelling women of a certain caste to become prostitutes.
[704] The Second Enquiry, 68. For example, the Second Enquiry details:
Japanese society is well aware of the unselfish motives which in many cases prompt girls to take up the life of prostitution, and the attitude towards prostitutes personally is influenced in their favour by this consideration. Amongst the Japanese, both in China and in the mother country, public opinion is more and more concerned with the social aspect of recourse by parents to such filial sacrifice and, indeed, the social danger of the system of licensed brothels in general.

In explaining prostitution in Arab countries, the Second Enquiry detailed how, because of the cultural practice of honour killings, recruits were generally women without families, orphans and "those victims of slum life in cities who have to fear nobody's vengeance for loss of family honour".[705] In Java, the Second Enquiry explained that divorced and abandoned women were the most numerous recruits where Mohammedan religious laws made both marriage and divorce very easy for men, leaving women divorced and destitute.[706]

Another difference in cultural attitudes the Second Enquiry found was in the ability of prostitutes to leave the profession through marriage. Cultural attitudes and marriage practices for prostitutes were found to be quite different than in Europe. For example, "on the whole, marriages of Chinese prostitutes are more frequent than marriages of women of this category in the Occident".[707]"Likewise, if in the Dutch East Indies a divorced woman is without means of subsistence takes to prostitution, she does so to earn a provisional living up to the time when she can get a new husband".[708]

The Second Enquiry detailed some of the religious and cultural differences that made it difficult to simply impose the model of rescue operations onto the colonial vice districts as the early rescue workers had hoped. The solution, according to the Second Enquiry, was an approach that relied more heavily on the local authorities to shut down brothels and other places where

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[705] The Second Enquiry, 81.
[706] The Second Enquiry, 81.
[707] The Second Enquiry, 47-48. This is explained by the following consideration by the authors of the Second Enquiry: Among a people so imbued with the spirit of filial obedience as the Chinese, the case of a girl who leaves home against the will of her parents and later, through idleness or a desire for easy luxury, drifts into prostitution can be but an extremely rare one. In China, probably the large majority of the prostitutes are girls who have been put into the profession originally by those who exercised parental or quasi-parental authority over them. They have the misfortune of being cruelly rewarded for obedience to those in authority over them. And, even when fully conscious of the injustice of their fate, they do not seem to complain. They bear it with the silent stoicism of the Chinese race. This helps them to resist the poison of degradation for a longer time than might be expected. As long as they succeed in this, it may still be possible that they can be fit companions for a certain category of Chinese men, and it is not entirely unusual for a man of that category to choose a prostitute, if not for his principle spouse, yet as a third wife
[708] The Second Enquiry, 81.

prostitution was taking place.[709] This is an approach to rescue work that focused on the official systematic shutting down of brothels.[710] This approach was coined the "Anglo-Saxon" approach to abolition, and is described in the following section.

27.4 Harbin Girls: Russian Women in China

The case study of the so-called "Harbin Girls" provides stark evidence that the abolitionist movement was inherently racist, white supremacist and ultimately concerned with saving white women from the danger of sex with men from other races.[711] In the Second Enquiry, the bulk of the discussion in the report itself is about a phenomenon coined the "Harbin Girls".[712] Harbin Girls were Russian women who worked as sex workers, waitresses and dancing girls in Harbin China and in other cities with large ex-pat communities in China, particularly Shanghai.[713] The report dedicates an inordinate amount of space to the issue of these Harbin Girls.[714]

Likewise, the only issue that was discussed in Geneva following the publication of the Second Enquiry was that of the Harbin Girls in China.[715] The Advisory Committee not only discussed the Harbin Girls, they became convulsed with concern over these Russian women working in restaurants, dancing halls and brothels in China.[716] Some participants went so far as to suggest that a special stamp should be issued in order to raise money for the Harbin Girls.[717]

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[709] The Second Enquiry, 47-49.
[710] The Second Enquiry, 47-49.
[711] See the Second Enquiry, 21-36.
[712] Second Enquiry, 21-36.
[713] Second Enquiry, 21-36. This ex-pat community included Russians, North American and European businessmen and government officials working in colonial governments.
[714] Second Enquiry, 21-36.
[715] See 1932 Minutes; 1933 Joint Reorg Session; Minutes of the 1934 Session; Report of the 1935 Session; and Report of the 1937 Meeting.
[716] 1932 Minutes; 1933 Joint Reorg Session; Minutes of the 1934 Session; Report of the 1935 Session; and Report of the 1937 Meeting.
[717] 1933 Minutes.

27.4.1 Inadequacy of Methods and Bias of Conclusions

This case study on the Harbin Girls is extremely instrumental in helping to deconstruct the inherent racism of the Second Enquiry as a whole. The methodology of the Second Enquiry involved questionnaires and official responses from each colonial government.[718] The Travelling Commission was limited to studying the international aspect of the problem, although what was meant by this statement was never explained. [719] The Travelling Commission was accompanied the entire time with an official representative, who would guide them to pre-approved locations within the city to examine.[720] Even the witnesses heard at the hearings were first approved by government officials, as attempts to solicit testimony from the public had largely been ineffective.[721]

The only location where people came forward was in Harbin. The Second Enquiry explained that in Harbin, the notice published by the Travelling Commission was met with a great swell of support from the Russian refugee community. This publication, the Second Enquiry explained, was the very same newspaper that had been publishing advertisements for Russian girls to travel within China to become waitresses or professional dancing partners.[722] As a result, there were a large number of Russians who testified before the Travelling Commission in Harbin, detailing the unusual and difficult situation there for Russian refugees.[723] It is likely that the reason the Travelling Commission knew which newspaper in which to even publish a notice in the first place was likely because of Mr. Pindor's years' experience as a diplomat in the city. It seems

[718] See the Second Enquiry.
[719] Second Enquiry
[720] Second Enquiry
[721] Second Enquiry
[722] Second Enquiry
[723] Second Enquiry

plausible, if not probable, that the luck experienced in Harbin was actually the result of a personal in-depth knowledge of the city by a member of the Travelling Commission.

Mr. Pindar's time as a diplomat in China also led him to have a personal experience of the Russian professional dancing girls in the elite Europeans and Americans in Shanghai, coupled with a profoundly detailed understanding of the history of Russian waitresses in Harbin. It appears from a plain reading of the text of the Second Enquiry that this personal knowledge led the author to the conclusion that "the most serious problem and one which is fraught with the danger of further development concerned Russian women of the refugee class in Northern China and Manching".[724]

The extent and nature of the sex industry is notoriously difficult to establish. For an example of how complicated even agreeing on a definition of "trafficking" can be, see the discussion by Lemoncelli in *The Politics of Trafficking*.[725] The nature and extent of trafficking was subject to a wide variety of statistics. The core of the statistics problem in trafficking is the controversial nature of the definition of trafficking itself. Some believed that all sex work is by its nature trafficking. Others maintained that the consenting sex worker could exist but that debt bondage was tantamount to trafficking. Still others maintained that only the forcible movement of a woman across international borders in order to compel her into the sex trade fell within the definition of trafficking. Statistics in turn varied greatly depending on what legal definition was adopted.

More deeply, however, the sex industry is notoriously stigmatized and clandestine in nature. The methods used by the Travelling Commission were probably doomed to fail as soon as the League Council agreed to so many concessions in order to secure the cooperation of the

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[724] Second Enquiry
[725] Lemoncelli, *"First International Movement"*.

colonial governments.[726] The information received by the Travelling Commission was white washed and edited by colonial governments.[727] The Country Reports were able to use vague legal definitions to create statistics that corresponded with the image they wished to convey to the League of Nations and the international community. This in turn led to conclusions that may or may not have corresponded to the facts on the ground, despite the fact the Travelling Commission was in fact in the cities they wrote about in the Second Enquiry. While they were in the countries they wrote about, the guided English tours by colonial government officials were unlikely to give the Travelling Commission an understanding of what the lived experience actually was for women working in the sex industry. The focus of Harbin Girls throughout the report as the most serious problem of trafficking in the "Far East" demonstrates both the inadequacy of the Travelling Commission's methodology and the biased nature of its conclusions.

Issues that the Travelling Commission should have focused on but did not because of bias and weakness in methodology generally encapsulate what the lived experience of women who worked in the sex industry actually were. They did not examine clandestine industries in countries where brothels were illegal. This was a critical mistake because they had no real comparator with legal brothels other than what colonial reports stated. They did not look behind the colonial reports to examine whether and to what extent criminalizing brothels made life more dangerous or impoverished for women who had worked in legal brothels. The Travelling Commission did not enquire about any kind of unintended consequences of criminalizing brothels in the colonies.

27.5 Anglo-Saxon Abolition Model

There were two competing approaches to the abolition of prostitution during the Interwar period. As discussed in the Glory Years Chapter, the Committee, led by the Geneva Group,

[726] See the Second Enquiry.
[727] Second Enquiry.

adopted the policy of gradual reduction. This change of official policy marked a change for the Committee, who had previously subscribed to an approach that focused on criminal regulation and official closure of entire vice districts. As noted above, during the 1937 Far East Conference, the immediate legislative approach to abolition was coined the "Anglo-Saxon abolition model" by the delegates at the Conference.[728] In describing the difference between the two approaches, the 1937 Far East Conference Report stated:

> The ideas which underlie the actual enforcement of abolitionist measures and which determine their character can perhaps be divided into two groups. There is the point of view, chiefly represented in the East by Anglo-Saxon authorities, that regulation of prostitution being an evil in itself, no compromise should be admitted on that point; abolition should not be conditional. Hence the enforcement of abolitionist measures is considered to be rather a problem of public order and security, deriving from police powers, than a social problem in the strict sense of the word.[729]

The so-called Anglo-Saxon approach was adopted in British colonial holdings during the period with the introduction of legislation and policies that systematically closed down brothels over a period of time. Below are descriptions of how these abolitionist policies worked in British Malaya and Singapore in particular:

> The policy pursued in British Malaya with regard to the problem of an incoming traffic in Chinese women may be divided into three periods. The first is the period up to 1927, during which brothels were allowed throughout Malaya, and Chinese girls were permitted to enter the ports of the Straits Settlements for the purpose of becoming inmates of those brothels; the second period, from 1927 to 1930, during which brothels were allowed throughout

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[728] The Far East Conference Report, 49.
[729] Far East Conference Report, 49.

> Malaya but no avowed prostitutes were permitted to enter the country, and the third period beginning in 1930, since when brothels have not been allowed in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States, nor have avowed prostitutes been admitted into the Peninsula.[730]

Another example that is given of this approach to abolition was in Singapore:

> In 1926, that is, before the entry of fresh prostitutes from China was stopped, there were over 2,200 prostitutes registered in "known" brothels in Singapore. In the same year, 895 Chinese women had arrived in Singapore from China to become prostitutes in Malaya. On the promulgation of the Ordinance of 1930, by which the system of brothels was abolished, a certain proportion of the "known" brothels were closed, and the remainder were to be abolished gradually and systematically in such a way as, while causing the least possible hardship to the inmates, would bring about the desired result in the shortest time.[731]
>
> The systematic closing of brothels in the chief centres of the Straits Settlements- that is Singapore and Penang- has forced those who profited by the earnings of brothel prostitutes to seek other ways of exploiting the girls. Small lodging houses are now used by Chinese and Japanese as a rendezvous point.[732]

The Second Enquiry adopted the Anglo-Saxon approach to the abolition of trafficking. It explained that the first step to fight international trafficking was for domestic governments to abolish licensed houses.[733] The abolitionist agenda included criminalizing many aspects of the commercial sex and vice districts. It included increased border policing and increased powers to

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[730] Far East Conference Report, 49.
[731] The Far East Conference Report, 52.
[732] The Far East Conference Report, 53.
[733] The Far East Conference Report, 53.

search and shut down music halls and cabarets. It was essentially what Janet Halley describes as a "carceral feminist" agenda: one that focuses on criminal law solutions to women's sexual exploitation.[734]

Increased law enforcement at the border was a critical aspect of the abolitionist position.[735] These efforts included increased funding for border control and increased powers to keep immoral women out of countries of destination. In describing what the Second Enquiry meant by "efforts to protect women", it stated:

> Every girl we examine now is a potential victim and if there is any doubt, we make them put up a bond. *We are not hindered in any way now by the mere fact that the girl said she wanted to be a prostitute. Previously our own moral sense about them was blunted because we had to allow some*.[736]

The efforts to protect foreign women involved putting a bond on any women the border police considered to be immoral.[737] Further, the criminalization of prostitution freed the border police to use wider and broader discretion in determining who they thought was immoral and who was not.

The report went on to provide what the Commission considered the most promising solution: collaboration with missions and women's organizations.[738] The Second Enquiry reminded the reader that missions and women's organizations could be found in practically all the countries visited and they were engaged in prevention and rescue work with prostitutes.[739] In addition to providing rescue and prevention work, the women's organizations had also been

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[734] Halley, *Split Decisions*, Justin Marceau, *Beyond Cages: Animal Law and Criminal Punishment* (Cambridge University Press, 2019).
[735] See the Second Enquiry, 96.
[736] Second Enquiry, 96 (emphasis added).
[737] Second Enquiry, 96.
[738] See the Second Enquiry, 97.
[739] Second Enquiry, 97.

"responsible for the inspiration of efficient government measures introduced to combat the prostitution and traffic".[740]

In connection with rescue work, the Second Enquiry noted that the Salvation Army had a network of branches covering several countries in the East. The Second Enquiry suggested that this network of missionaries be provided with official responsibility to combat the traffic.[741] In other words, the Second Enquiry was suggesting giving missionaries in the East authority to police those considered immoral and incarcerate these women in rescue homes run by these same missionaries.

The list of organizations visited by the Travelling Commission makes it clear that rescue homes of the kind detailed in the Glory Years Chapter were also in operation in the East. The Sisters of the Good Shephard were specifically noted as an important rescue organization in the Philippines during the period.[742] This is the same organization that was responsible for some of the most disturbing rescue homes throughout Europe. The women's organizations were described as valiant heroes: "there is hardly a country in the East today where associations of the women of the country do not play an important role in the fight against the evil traffic, lending their moral support to those who are engaged in rescue and preventative work".[743]

As an example of these organizations, the Second Enquiry details how many Catholics were working in China:

> In connection with this subject it is interesting to note that, in China, of all foreigners, missionaries alone have the privilege of residing in all parts of the

[740] Second Enquiry, 97.
[741] Second Enquiry, 97.
[742] Second Enquiry, 97.
[743] Second Enquiry, 97.

> country. Catholic missions, more particularly in China, have native clergy and nuns in a very high proportion.[744]

The solution was not new. The First Enquiry also found that collaboration with women's organizations was the best chance to eliminate the traffic in Europe and that lesson was learned.[745]

28 Conference of Central Authorities of Eastern Countries, Bandoeng , 1937

The 1937 Traffic in Women and Children Conference of Central Authorities in Eastern Countries was held in Bandoeng, Java (1937 Far East Conference).[746] At the time, Indonesia was under the colonial control of the Netherlands and was called the Netherlands Indies. Government representatives, missions, and individuals considered experts in the area attended the Conference. The missions and international organizations were allowed to take part if their participation was agreed upon by a majority of the other countries.[747]

There were sixty-two attendees at the conference, twenty-seven government delegates participated, along with twelve representatives from missions, and twenty from local organizations.[748] In the end, only two experts participated, one from the International Police Commission and the other participated in the commission for the Second Enquiry.[749] Forty percent of the attendees were women, and Mrs. S.C. Mukerjee, Chairman of the All-India Women's Conference acted as the Vice-President for the Conference.[750]

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[744] Second Enquiry, 97.
[745] First Enquiry.
[746] The Far East Conference Report.
[747] The Far East Conference Report.
[748] The Far East Conference Report.
[749] The Far East Conference Report.
[750] The Far East Conference Report.

The 1937 Conference had a six-point agenda, which clearly adopted the abolitionist conception of sex trafficking.[751] First, the attendees discussed closer and wider exchange of information between the police and other authorities. Second, they discussed ways to curtail migration.[752] Third, the Conference addressed the issue of abolishing licensed brothels in the colonial holdings.[753] Fourth, the attendees discussed how women's missions could collaborate more closely with the police.[754] Fifth, the possibility of hiring more women in the police forces was addressed. Finally, sixth, the Conference discussed the issue of Russian women in China.[755]

The Conference Report outlined the progress of the abolitionist movement in the Far East in the following way:

> At this point of the discussion it may be useful to present a rough outline of the position of the countries represented at the Conference with regard to regulated prostitution. Of these nine countries, the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States, Hong-Kong, The United States of America, India and the Netherlands Indies may be classified as totally abolitionist, as they have neither regulation of prostitution nor licensed houses. In China, licensed or tolerated brothels are prohibited in principle, but the principle of abolition has not yet been fully applied by the Government itself. The Indo-Chinese Union, Japan, Portuguese India, Macao and Siam are regulationist, but in different degrees. The future of regulation in Indo-Chinese Union and in the French concession of Shanghai, where regulated prostitution and licensed brothels exist, will depend on the progress of the abolitionist legislation in France which has been laid before Parliament. In

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[751] 1937 Far East Conference, 1.
[752] 1937 Far East Conference, 1.
[753] 1937 Far East Conference, 1.
[754] 1937 Far East Conference, 1.
[755] 1937 Far East Conference, 1.

> Japan, the abolitionist movement is progressing, and in a growing number of prefectures licensed brothels have actually been closed. [756]

Some countries reported a decrease in trafficking (Straits Settlement), others reported an increase (Netherlands Indies).[757] The operations of the rescue operations were not progressing in a uniform way that made generalizations possible. As described in the 1937 Conference Report:

> While some international bodies are actively engaged in certain countries, they still have very little influence in others. While national, regional or local organizations are actively at work in some countries, they are pratically non-existent elsewhere. This is to some extent due to the differences in social, economic and political development reflected in the difference in the position of the women in different countries… Accordingly, the problem of the relation of the voluntary organizations with the authorities should not be considered as a whole for the entire East.
>
> Wherever private organizations are influenced by British or American ideas or have the personal help of British (and in some cases American) social workers, the collaboration resembles more closely that existing in Europe. From the answers received from a number of Indian Provinces, it would appear that the different vigilance associations have considerably developed of late years; that the associations keep in very close touch with the police and that women representatives have been selected for full time duty with the police force.[758]

In general, the 1937 Report concluded that the abolitionist movement was making significant progress in the Far East. They were strongly of the opinion that the League needed to open an

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[756] 1937 Far East Conference, 46.
[757] 1937 Far East Conference, 46.
[758] 1937 Far East Conference, 57.

office in the East dedicated to operating as a communication hub for rescue and police operations in the region.[759] They also issued recommendations to increase cooperation with the volunteer organizations, increase punishment of traffickers, and hire women in police forces.[760] These are similar themes to those recommendations that were being issued in Geneva during the Glory Years. Interestingly, there was also a policy shift during the 1937 Conference away from the immediate "no compromise" Anglo-Saxon approach towards an approach put forward by the French representative. This is, of course, what happened in Geneva in 1927 with Mme. Sainte-Croix and M. Bourgois, as discussed in the Glory Years Chapter.

28.1.1 Shift of Abolitionist Approach

The alternate, more gradual approach to abolishing prostitution was described at the 1937 Far East Conference.

> The other school of thought moves on somewhat different lines. For them the question of regulation and abolition is not one in which there is any "categorical imperative"; it is rather a question of expediency. They agree that abolition is the ideal state; they accept that abolition as the final goal; but they consider that its application should be conditional upon fulfilment of certain essential conditions, not so much of a technical nature as the measures enumerated above, but of a fundamental character. They hold that abolition pre-supposes changes in social circumstances. This approach to the question is reflected in the statement of the French delegate in whose opinion abolition has to be preceded, in some Eastern countries, especially Indo-China, by changes in what is called the *milieu social*. In Indo-China for instance, there is no regulation of births or marriages. Local custom regards the birth of a girl as an unlucky event, while in Annam births of girls are not reported at all.

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[759] 1937 Far East Conference, 57.
[760] 1937 Far East Conference, 57.

> Women are legally and socially in an inferior position and are also illiterate. In his opinion, abolition, to be successful, presupposes not merely the general education of women and the raising of their legal status, but also the establishment of a whole series of medical, social and other measures.[761]

This approach based on expediency, was ultimately adopted by the Conference. It declared itself in favour of abolition "as a final goal".[762] This shift of policy was considered critically important to the attendees of the 1937 Far East Conference. As was stated in the Conference Report:

> From an immediately practical point of view, the declaration in favour of establishing a League Bureau in the East might be considered the most important decision of the Conference; but from a general point of view, the declaration of principle regarding the abolition of tolerated brothels might well be held to be the most important single declaration made by the Conference. It was characterized by the delegate of the Straits Settlements in his concluding speech, in which he endeavoured to gauge the value of the results achieved by the Conference, as signifying "the dawn of a new era in the East".[763]

This is a fascinating mirror in the developmental trajectory to the approach to abolition. In a very similar manner, two separate groups both decided, based on the suggestion of the French Representative, to abandon the Anglo-Saxon approach and adopt a gradual and more practical approach to prostitution policy and rescue movements in the Far East. It is difficult to predict whether this model would have continued to be successful for the rescue movement in the colonies. As mentioned above, 1936 marked the fifteenth and final session of the Committee in Geneva.

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[761] 1937 Far East Conference, 51.
[762] 1937 Far East Conference, 53.
[763] 1937 Far East Conference, 54.

They were unable to assist with establishing a League Bureau because the Committee itself was being dissolved.

This marks the unsatisfying end to the narrative of the League of Nations Advisory Committee for Trafficking in Women and Children. With the dissolution of the Committee in Geneva, the recommendations and suggestions that were so carefully crafted at the 1937 Far East Conference were not picked up or acted upon. The story of the Committee ends with no dénouement, simply an abrupt end to all activities and organizing on the issue of prostitution and vice in Geneva. The rescue workers themselves continued on. As did the myths and legends constructed and built upon during the interwar period. These stereotypes of the "trafficking victim" and the *souteneur* was picked up after WWII at the United Nations when drafting a new treaty on sex trafficking. This is discussed in the Conclusion.

This Chapter has argued that the Committee's Glory Years were interrupted by a series of economic and political changes that resulted in a rupture of power relations. As a result of the Reorg of 1933, the women on the Committee were subtly but severely curtailed in how much influence they could wield at the annual meetings. The ripple effect of these ruptures can be seen clearly in the 1936 Report on the Rehabilitation of Adult Prostitutes. This Report and the discussion at the Committee were primarily focused on the mental condition of prostitutes. Two psychiatrists replaced the women as experts on rehabilitation, as discourse shifted from the religious to the medical model for understanding sexuality.

The Rehabilitation Report is interesting as an example of how the Reorg influenced the work of the Committee over time. Under the model of penance, the women were sent to Magdalene Asylums to be "healed". Under the psychiatric model, they were sent to medical institutions for the same purpose. Both models ultimately aimed at keeping these "immoral" or "abnormal" women locked up in quasi-judicial institutions. Under both models, there was no legal recourse for these women deemed unfit for society. Prostitutes were no longer just immoral; they were now also mentally defective.

The unintended consequence of the Reorg, however, was to bifurcate the policy that applied to Europe and the colonial holdings of the member states. The Reorg resulted in the Second Enquiry and the Imperial Rescue Project generally being moved out of Geneva. As a result, the policy that was being developed for European rescue movements was not simultaneously being applied to the Imperial Rescue Project. The rescue missions in the colonies began to develop a separate colonial rescue project that was mushrooming after the publication of the Second Enquiry. This Imperial Rescue Project adopted abolitionist policy and mirrored the developmental trajectory of the Geneva Group in interesting and dynamic ways.

The Imperial Rescue Project lays bare how deeply racist the rescue project was during the Interwar period. The entire project was aimed at imposing a Western Christian sexual morality onto a wide variety of people who had no interest in adopting the missionaries' moral code. The Second Enquiry reveals how sex work itself was an ethnically differentiated business in the colonies if not in Europe. While European women represented a small proportion of sex workers in the colonies, international attention in the Far East was nonetheless skewed toward concern for (white) Russian women.

Committee discussion and analysis of Asian women was at once less moralizing and more sociologically informed, in part because of the recognition that the predicaments of trafficked women were tied to gender relations in which women were deeply devalued and economic self-support was extremely challenging. Such insights are almost entirely missing in the discussion about European sex work, despite the fact similarly unequal gender relations were operating in Europe during the period and economic opportunities were also limited. European women were not able to vote in many countries during the period, including France, Greece, Belgium and Switzerland. Yet, because the Committee were describing societies that it thought (comparatively) barbaric, unequal and deeply problematic gender relations were visible and considered to be salient by the Committee.

The discussion on European sex workers focuses on their moral character and need to morally reform these fallen women. Blame is laid at the European woman's personal character failings. There is a sense immorality is a airborne disease spread by women who refuse to accept traditional gender norms. In contrast, Asian women are seen as a group who are being compelled by root causes of inequality and poverty to engage in commercial sex. Asian sex workers are noted to be demurer and less blameworthy than their European counterparts. These Asian sex workers were not disturbing the hierarchical gender relations they were subjected to. The missionaries saw

them in a more empathetic light because they did not rouse the gender trouble that European sex workers did. These Asian sex workers were still displaying the characteristics of modesty and humility that aligned with the Christian ethic of subordinate women. Accordingly, they were seen in more sympathetically.

1936 was the fifteenth and final meeting of the Committee in Geneva. The Social Section underwent a reorganization which resulted in the Committee being dissolved, and a Social Questions Committee was created in its place. This new body had no involvement in rescue operations and simply issued an annual report of country information. This sudden end to the Committee did not result in all its work being forgotten. As discussed in the Conclusion below, the Committee developed the rescue ideology in the interwar period. The massive production of information on the issue of trafficking developed a new iteration of the rescue narrative, the trafficking victim, and the trafficker. These stereotypes and folk devils were lying in wait for another moral panic to seize on the politically advantageous rhetoric and emotions involved in the issue of prostitution.

Chapter 5
Conclusion

This thesis narrates the rise and fall of a moral panic surrounding sexuality during the interwar period.[764] At the first League of Nations Committee meeting in 1922, there was already a pre-existing network of rescue workers who were represented vigorously by women in Geneva. The Early Days Chapter described the first five years of the Committee, from 1922-1927. This chapter argued that the social conditions existing in post-war Europe and America created a perfect storm for the development of a moral panic surrounding sex trafficking and prostitution. Rather than being primarily interested in protecting women from exploitation, the Committee was engaged in a much broader campaign against vice. During the first five years of the Committee's tenure, the rescue movement continuously gained ground in Geneva.

This influence reached its peak with publication of the First Enquiry in 1926, when sex trafficking was conceptualized as a moral problem and rescue workers as *the experts* in the rehabilitation of fallen women. The First Enquiry, published in 1926, set out the ideological tenets of the rescue movement under the auspices of empirical facts. The First Enquiry conceptualized prostitution as a moral problem, which required the close collaboration of rescue workers to solve. With the publication of the First Enquiry the rescue movement entered into its Glory Years from 1927-1933.

The Glory Years were the period of time when the rescue movement experienced a period of organization and popularity that surpassed even the "white slave panic" before the Great War.

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[764] This moral panic has been detailed within the Canadian context by Mariana Valverde, *Light, Soap and Water*.

The First Enquiry was widely published in 1926 and as a result, there was a "swell of public interest in the subject". The rescue movement experienced a period of rapid expansion into Eastern Europe, while rescue operations already in existence in European urban centres were intensified. These rescue operations involved station and railway patrol, vice district patrol, rescue homes, hostels, obscenity policing and coordinated propaganda campaigns. An entire network of Magdalene asylums were in operation in Europe during the period. They employed extremely severe methods of punishment in institutions run by religious institutions rather than the state. Yet, increasingly women were being sentenced to time at Magdalene asylums. These institutions were self-funded and operated laundries where inmates worked long hours in enforced silence. This system of female penitentiaries experienced a revival during this period partly as a result of increased cooperation with the state and judiciary.

29 Uncomfortable Lessons in Women's History

We have seen how the Glory Years lays bare what Valverde calls the "great femininity paradox of rescue work": this early women's movement benefited white middle-class rescue workers, at the expense of those women they were ostensibly "rescuing".[765] This is an important lesson of the interwar rescue movement, and it is an uncomfortable one for many feminists, namely that this remarkably successful early feminist campaign was inherently classist and racist. An entire rescue industry developed transnationally during the interwar period, and this opened up new space for women to participate in public policy. There were exciting opportunities for women to travel, to work, all within the strict social norms they ascribed to as women. These women managed to accede to positions of international policy making that was assumed impossible during the period.

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[765] Valverde, *Light, Soap and Water.*

The campaigns for equal penalties for men and women and for increased women police officers were clearly feminist in nature. Yet, the result of these campaigns was to empower white middle-class women at the expense of immigrant and coloured women. This expense was great: they were literally being hunted in vice districts and railway stations and encouraged to reform into virtuous Christian women by means of rescue homes. The rescue movement was not only criminalizing immigrant women, it was simultaneously incarcerating them in religious institutions that were largely outside of the rule of law. This system of morality regulation provided middle-class women with freedom at the expense of immigrant and racialized women.

With the increase of interest in women's history, some have started to look to the women at the League as examples of heroic early feminists. Avril Sainte-Croix is described as an "intrepid crusader". While it is important to tell these women's stories, it is also important to tell them fully. These women participated and propagated deeply troubling campaigns against vice and immorality. To whitewash their history as valiant is to continue to silence the women who were subject to these campaigns against immorality. It also prevents us from learning from the past so that we do not repeat it.[766]

There is another important, albeit more opaque lesson to be learned from the success of the women in Geneva during the interwar period. The only area of international policy that women were allowed to participate in was sex policy. There was an exception it seems for the participation and even leadership of women in the regulation of sexuality. Sexuality was women's business. Even at a time when some women didn't have the right to vote in their own countries, they were

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[766] See for example, Constance Backhouse, *Petticoats and Prejudice: Women and Law in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: Women's Press/Osgoode Society, 1991).

leading the international sex policy at the League with impressive skill. However, it was only policy related to sex and to children that women had any perceived expertise in.

Men told women they could deal with issues related to sex. In other words, the very fact that the women's movement focused on sex trafficking was deeply impacted by gender relations and men's sense of what was proper, shared by the women they appointed. Women dealt with sex because men told them to. This fact has been lost in history, but ought to be remembered particularly within the contemporary feminist sex wars. It was the men in charge (specifically, international policy makers in Geneva), who decided that women could deal with sex but only sex. This should give contemporary feminists reason to pause and consider how their own priorities and focuses may be shaped by this historical sexual ghettoization of women in international policy making related to sexuality.

The Glory Years are interrupted by three events: the Great Depression; the reorganization of the Committee in 1933; and the focus of the rescue movement on the "Far East". The Imperial Years provide an even starker example of how the League was engaged in a project of sexuality governance based on a hierarchical model of assumed white supremacy and sexual morality. Even the structure of the Second Enquiry reveals the primacy given to the white women. For example, white women were discussed first, followed by all other races. Upon reflection, the ultimate purpose of the Second Enquiry is apparent: to determine whether there was another "white slavery scare" in the so-called "Far East". In the end, the only issue from the Second Enquiry that garnered attention in Geneva was that of Russian (white) women in China.

The Imperial Period of the Trafficking Committee provides a unique glimpse into how racial power, and indeed the construction of race itself, was being produced through a myriad of legal rules on sexual conduct and in particular, inter-racial sexual relations in the colonies. This robust international governance structure was being exported to the colonies in an attempt to

regulate the sexual behaviour of colonized peoples. At the same time, the rescue workers were defining their own whiteness and morality in their policing of the "other" with each force shaping the other to create that social category, an "us" and a "them". Race formation is a dialectical process.

While the rescue movement was gaining ground what historian Barbara Bush coined the "feminized Empire" of the interwar period, there was a simultaneous demotion of women in Geneva, as we saw in Chapter 4. The reorganization of 1933 had a subtle but profound effect on the power relations in Geneva. Over the remainder of the Committee's tenure, there was a distinct move towards the medical model for understanding prostitution. The psychiatrist replaced the rescue worker as the expert on how to rehabilitate the prostitute. Discourse of "fallen women" was replaced by the language of "feeble minded prostitutes". Mental institutions rather than Magdalene Asylums were the destination of women arrested on prostitution charges.

30 The Infamous Folk Devil

The League's interwar campaign against *souteneurs* had the most significant and lasting impact on the international legal landscape of sex trafficking. As Chapter 3 narrated, the campaign against *souteneurs* was explosively popular with the rescue movement and governments. Rescue workers, particularly those who identified as feminist, were adamant about the need for men to be punished along with women for prostitution. Governments, on the other hand, were keen to have attention away from the systems of state regulated prostitution that occupied the attention of prewar "abolitionists". At the same time, governments in Europe were beginning to recognize the political opportunism of a movement intent on morally reforming the population. The result was a strong international call for increased criminal penalties on *souteneurs*. The Committee dedicated an inordinate amount of time to discovering who the *souteneur* was and how to punish him. In so

doing, the Committee was actually engaged in the creation of a mythological criminal character that lives on in our laws and collective imagination as the "trafficker".

WWII interrupted the work of moral reformers, and yet when the United Nations was established, the issue of sex trafficking was again on the international policy making agenda. In 1947, a protocol to amend the 1921 Convention was tabled by the United Nations Secretary General. This led to the signing of a new convention on sex trafficking on November 12, 1947 in Geneva, which was eventually ratified by forty-six countries. This protocol was amended in 1949 in what became the 1949 *Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Person and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others*.[767] This Convention enshrined many of the tenets of the rescue movement into international law. The preamble of the 1949 Convention states that:"Whereas prostitution and the accompanying evil of the traffic in persons for the purpose of prostitution are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and *endanger the welfare of the individual, the family and the community."*

The Convention explicitly sets out the so-called abolitionist position in Articles 2 and 6. More broadly, however, the Convention sets out a severe carceral agenda for traffickers. In particular, in Article 1, all parties to the Convention agreed to punish any person who "procures, entices or leads away, for the purposes of prostitution" or "exploits the prostitution of another person" *even with their consent*. In other words, the possibility of consensual sex work did not exist in international law from 1949-2000. The criminal penalties that state parties agreed to inflict on traffickers were set out in Articles 7-9. Parties to the Convention agreed to disqualify all those convicted of offences under the Convention from the exercise of their civil rights (Article 7). Further, with Article 8, all state parties agreed to make sex trafficking offenses an extraditable

[767] This Convention remained the only international convention on sex trafficking until the 2000 Trafficking Protocol.

offence. Article 9 extended jurisdiction of foreign courts should a country not have sufficiently strong criminal laws against traffickers.

In a similar way that the verbiage "white slave trade" was replaced by "sex trafficking" in the 1921 Convention, the "souteneur" had been renamed the "trafficker". However, the 1949 Convention sets out the many of the punishments suggested by the Committee in the interwar period, discussed in Chapter 6. One of the most vigorous campaigns undertaken by Avril Sainte-Croix on the Committee was to advocate for the abolition of a double standard, one that punished women and not men. This is perhaps one of the most clear-cut feminist positions she maintained. Throughout the tenure of the Committee, Sainte-Croix lobbied for an equal standard to apply to both sexes. At the same time, government representatives looking to increase immigration control or to police working class neighbourhoods and vice districts seized on the call for increased punishments of *souteneurs*. This resulted in the Committee engaging in the creation of a criminal folk devil, the trafficker.

The conditions in Geneva provided a unique opportunity for feminists on the Committee to cooperate with government representatives to encourage rescue movements and increased penalties on *souteneurs*. Through the use of magazine articles, country reports, volunteer organization reports, sub-committee reports, conference minutes, novels, and two global enquiries, the Committee was vigorously engaged in constructing the mythological character of the *souteneur*. They produced hundreds of pages of archival materials documenting discussions and research on the *souteneur*.

The character of the "white slaver" that was subject of the prewar moral reformers underwent some important developments and changes during the interwar period. First, there was a move away from viewing the "white slaver" as Jewish, and a push instead to characterize "traffickers" more broadly as dangerous non-white immigrants and working-class men. The "white

slaver" of the prewar reform campaigns was mostly the subject of exaggerated news reports and novels. The "souteneur" of the interwar period, on the other hand, was also the subject of reports, and studies and debates and subcommittees, all of which are preserved in the archival record. The fictional character of the "white slaver" was transformed by the work on the Committee into the "trafficker": a reiteration of the "white slaver" Folk Devil before the war. In other words, each time a moral reform campaign summons forth a folk devil to operate as the scapegoat for social anxieties, that character undergoes development and changes that are preserved until the next summoning. This folk devil is based on partly on the real demographics of persons involved in trafficking during the interwar period, but once summoned can be used to justify the policing of broad groups of people considered immoral.

31 Enduring Folk Tales

It is important to be able to recognize a folk devil when it incarnates in the midst of a moral panic for several reasons. Firstly, it is a useful indicator that social and economic unrest has risen to the level of a moral panic. It is useful to be able to understand otherwise frenetically emotional responses and exaggerated news reports. The existence and extent of hegemonic social unrest required to precipitate the summoning of a folk devil is even hard to gauge. When a folk devil appears, we know the theory of moral panic can provide at least some direction through the storm of divisive politics and explosive rhetoric. It can help us understand what otherwise seems difficult to comprehend and it can help society navigate shifting demographic and economics more gracefully if we can avoid the mistakes of our past.

This project has argued that moral panics tend to follow relatively similar patterns, which can be forecast by a handful of factors. When broad economic and demographic changes alter the social landscape of urban centres, there is a predictable reaction from those who wish to maintain the *status quo*. In particular, whenever there is a threat (or perceived threat) to patriarchy, to white

supremacy, or to the capitalist class structure, there tends to be a corresponding moral panic surrounding a collection of parallel challenges to sexuality norms and/ or family structures. In the context of sex trafficking, the Folk Devil of the sex trafficker remained mostly dormant until the late 1990s.

Jo Doezema documents how the mythology from the white slave trade scare can be found in the discourse of "sex slaves" in the negotiations for the 2000 *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Woman and Children*. She explains:

> If it becomes increasingly difficult to pin down exactly what 'trafficking' might be and who the victims are, one thing the 'evidence' does point to is how emotionally potent the images used in trafficking narratives are. This is not the first time that such images have been used to evoke a more generalized sense of moral panic, or the first time that feminists and other political actors have employed these images in calls for intervention.
>
> From the time they were produced to the present time, the narratives of the 'white slave trade' have been accepted as literal truth by many, including feminist anti-trafficking narratives.[768]

One of the key legacies of the interwar rescue movement was the massive contribution it made to the trafficking narrative. Indeed, this group of zealous policy makers were engaged in a transnational web of rescue operations, with Geneva operating as its hub of communication and direction. This apparatus led to the collection of massive amounts of material documenting the rescue movement, and what the local organizations were doing to combat "immorality" in their own communities.

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[768] Jo Doezema, *Sex Slaves and Discourse Masters: The Construction of Trafficking*, (London and New York: Zed Books, 2010), 15.

While these archives might be hidden away and mostly forgotten, they represent the process of moulding an ideological understanding of prostitution as a moral and medical problem. They contributed to the folklore of the 'white slave trade' adding flesh and substance to its main characters. This ideological understanding of prostitution continues today as the hegemonic framework for understanding sex work. The models promulgated by the rescue movement and psychiatrists during the interwar period continue to predominate in discussion instead of looking at the socio-economic causes of trafficking.

In addition to folklore, this history provides us with a warning: sex trafficking can be a dangerously explosive issue. The interwar rescue movement demonstrates how combustible the combination of religion, feminism and the state can be when they are allied in targeting sexual immorality in immigrant and working-class communities. Prostitution as a social issue operates as a ganglion of social anxieties. When the right combinations of social nerves are agitated, it is likely that another wave of panic will develop surrounding sex trafficking. Prostitution also operates as a convenient metaphor and guise to conduct law enforcement campaigns in urban centres. In times of great social stress when people are likely to get dangerously crazy about sexuality, the folklore of 'sexual slavery' is likely to resurface once again. Next time, we would do well to heed the lessons of our foremothers' intrepid mistakes.